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FREDERIC OZANAM

HIS LIFE AND WORKS

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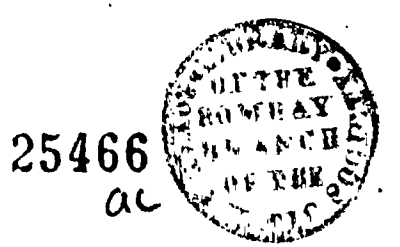
FREDERIC OZANAM

PROFESSOR AT THE SORBONNE

HIS LIFE AND WORKS

BY

KATHLEEN O'MEARA



EDINBURGH
EDMONSTON AND DOUGLAS
1876.

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PREFACE.

In England the name of Frederic Ozanam is not widely known. In France he holds high rank as a *savan*, an orator, and the great Christian teacher of the Sorbonne; his works are held in esteem by the most learned of his countrymen, and he is considered one of the most remarkable of that valiant group, including Montalembert and Lacordaire, who fought bravely, and in a measure successfully, for the moral regeneration of their country. But, apart from these claims, Ozanam's character and individual experience form a study of deep interest, being

a noble testimony to the power of truth. He made it his ideal, in an unbelieving and money-loving age, to serve truth for truth's sake. He was born poor, and he had a great, almost a morbid, fear of poverty, yet he chose to remain poor all his life rather than swerve in the least degree from the high and narrow path that he had chosen at the outset. He did a noble work, which still lives and bears witness to the power of love. He has left a golden mark upon his generation.

I have done my best to make this record worthy of him, and for this reason I have striven against partiality. But only those who have grouped history round a biography can understand the powerful attraction which the hero gradually exercises over the mind of his biographer, and the spell that he casts upon

his heart. I do not pretend to have been proof against this influence; but I can declare that I have never consciously yielded to it, that I have never indulged in panegyric, and never myself spoken when I could make Ozanam speak. His works must praise him; if they fail to do so, it would be vain in me to try to supplement their testimony.

September 1876.

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CHAPTER I.

1813-1831.

THE Ozanams would seem to be one of those races where virtue and science are an entailed inheritance, descending like heirlooms from one generation to another. For more than three centuries every generation produced some distinguished man of science, and invariably counted one, frequently several, members in the service of the sanctuary. There is still preserved amongst the family treasures a MS. Office of Our Lady, in Gothic characters, and illuminated with delicate skill, by Elizabeth Ozanam, a nun of the Ursuline convent in the fifteenth century. In the last pages of the book the genealogy of the elder branch of the Ozanams is recorded, each generation inscribing its names and dates individually.

Not satisfied, however, with this noble family tree, the Ozanams trace back its roots to immemorial tradition. In the first page[1] of the family records we read that one Jeremiah Hozannam,[2] a pretor in the 38th Roman Legion, came over to Gaul with Julius Cæsar, after the conquest of Seguvia,—a country situated between the Jura and the Alps,—and received as his share of the conquered territory a canton called Bellignum, lying north of Lyons, and known later as the village of Boulignieux. Jeremiah

[1] If this fabulous genealogy were claimed by any but a Jewish family, we should feel bound to dismiss it forthwith as beneath the serious notice of a biographer. Without, however, attributing to the story more than a legendary importance, it is too picturesque to be omitted.

[2] Hozannam is the plural of Hozanna, according to the Hebrew custom of writing family names in that number.

reclaimed this waste land, which was covered with woods and swamps, and founded there a little Jewish colony. He died in the year 43 before Christ, the same year that Cæsar was assassinated. He had many children, but the eldest is the only one whose genealogy has come down to us. He starts the long ancestral line in which Jacob, Ishmael, Elias, Abimelech, Jehoshaphat, Shem, etc. etc., pass on like a procession of witnesses vindicating the pure Jewish origin of the race. The march is uninterrupted until the beginning of the seventh century, when St. Didier, placing the cross in its way, stops it. The saint, having denounced Queen Brunhaut's wicked manner of life, was pursued by that sanguinary princess, and fled for security to a forest near Boulignieux, where Samuel Hozannam, the then chief of the tribe, sheltered him with native hospitality. St. Didier repaid it by baptising him and his people in the true faith, and henceforth we see Matthias, John, Peter, and other Christian names, intermingling more and more with the old Hebrew ones. The saint was seized at last by the emissaries of Brunhaut, and strangled on the banks of a little stream called the Renom, where, in course of time, a village arose, and was called St. Didier de Renom.

Benedict, grandfather of the subject of this memoir, was the first to suppress one *n* and the initial *H* in the family name, which from this time forth we see written "Ozanam." Benedict was nephew of Jacques Ozanam, the famous mathematician, whose panegyric was written by Fontenelle, and whose quaint saying, significant enough of his times, has been so often quoted by his contemporaries: "It is the business of the doctors of the Sorbonne to dispute, that of the Pope to dogmatise, and of mathematicians to go to heaven by the perpendicular."

Such is the story of the remoter ancestors of Frederic. Antoine, his father, when a very young man, was forced, by

the law of conscription, to serve in the army for five years. He entered a hussar regiment, and made the Italian campaign under Napoleon, then only a general, and had his share in the glories of Lodi, Arcola, Pavia, Rivoli, etc. He received five wounds on one field of battle; in spite of this, and disarmed, he captured the Neapolitan general, Prince de Cattolica, and led him prisoner to Bologna, a feat which established his reputation for valour and soldiership.

When the wars of the Republic were over, Antoine, unwilling to serve under the Empire, returned to his native town, Lyons, and soon after married Mademoiselle Nantas, the daughter of a wealthy merchant of that city. He devoted himself to commercial pursuits, and so successfully, that in a few years he was in possession of a handsome fortune. He then came to reside in Paris, where he lived very happily, until one day he gave his signature to a near relative who was in pecuniary difficulties. The kind but imprudent act resulted in his complete ruin. Everything was lost; even his furniture was sold off. The Emperor heard of it, and sent him at once a brevet of captain in his own guards, which he was just then raising, accompanied by a very flattering message to "the brilliant officer whose valour had made a lively impression on him." But Ozanam declined the offer; he could not forgive Bonaparte for having made a stepping-stone of the Republic to an Empire, and preferred to face the world, beggared as he was, in independence. His indomitable gaiety and firmness of character enabled him to meet poverty with the same intrepidity with which he had faced death at the cannon's mouth. He left his wife and young children in Paris, and set out for Italy, where he had made some friends during his military stay, and where he hoped to turn his French education to better profit than in his own country. He met with great sympathy, and secured a

sufficient number of lessons at Milan to enable him to send for his family and settle down there as a professor. Madame Ozanam and her children were accompanied by a faithful servant, who went by the name of Gui-gui amongst the children—a wonderful type of the old French servant that one hears of in records of former generations, but seldom, if indeed ever, meets with in the present one. Gui-gui shared her master's poverty, and worked her fingers to the bone to add her mite to the common store in those first days of sudden distress.

M. Ozanam, while working hard at his "lessons," had begun to study medicine, and, thanks to his indefatigable industry, and to that inherited instinct of science which seemed the birthright of his name, he was able, at the end of two years, to pass his examinations with brilliant success, and very soon acquired a fine practice. He devoted a large share of his time to the poor, but his disinterested kindness showed itself more especially to the sick soldiers of the garrison. A terrible epidemic broke out at Milan, and raged with peculiar fury amongst the troops; the two medical men attached to the military hospital caught the fever and died. Dr. Ozanam volunteered to replace them, and, taking up his abode in the hospital, he remained there till the end of the pestilence, with the sole unaided charge of several hundred invalids.

It was during this memorable year, 1813, that his son Frederic was born, on the 13th of April.

The entrance of the Austrians into Milan decided Dr. Ozanam to leave that city, it being repugnant to him to remain under a rule that was no longer French. He returned once more to Lyons, where the fame of his medical skill had already travelled, so as to secure him soon after his arrival a sufficiently large practice. But although his practice increased rapidly, and placed him for many years

at the head of his profession, Dr. Ozanam never became a rich man. Wealth was never his first aim; he looked upon the medical profession as a sort of priesthood, and divided his labours almost equally between the rich and the poor. His wife for seventeen years seconded him nobly in this apostolate of charity. When they had both grown old, and were no longer able to climb so nimbly up six and seven stories to the garrets where his poorer patients dwelt, they bound each other by a mutual promise not to go beyond the fourth story. Dr. Ozanam's infirm health made this limitation the more necessary, in that he was subject to a giddiness, which seized him without warning at any moment. His wife, for her part, suffered from an oppression of the chest, which was increased almost to suffocation by mounting stairs. Many a time the poor neighbours of those whom she was toiling up to see have come out of their rooms and found her sitting on the stairs, panting for breath. The husband and wife were not always loyal in keeping to their mutual promise. More than once it happened that the doctor, coming discreetly down from the seventh floor, where some more than common misery had enticed him, came face to face with his wife treacherously climbing up to it. It was in coming from one of those abodes of poverty that he eventually met his death. Familiar as he was with the perils of the dark, broken stairs, he made a false step and fell, injuring himself so severely that he died the next day. He had had fourteen children, all of whom died in childhood, except a daughter, whom he lost at the age of nineteen, and three sons, of whom Frederic was the second.

Frederic's childhood offers none of those picturesque or striking incidents that we like to discover in the dawn of great men. His one salient trait was an excessive sensibility to the sufferings of others. It is related that when

little more than a baby, at Milan, he could never hear the little sweeps as they passed under his nursery windows of a morning crying, "Spazza camino! spazza camino!" without sitting up in his cot to listen with an expression of intense pity on his face until the plaintive, childish voice died away; then he would exclaim with a little sigh, "Poor spazza camino!" and lie down again.

This precocious sensibility did not, however, exclude a certain self-willed energy and vehemence of temper. He was very fond of games, and very punctilious about keeping to fair play; but nothing could ever make him own that he was beaten; when his playfellows insisted on his giving them this legitimate satisfaction, the child would stamp his small foot on the ground and protest that he "would rather die than say it!"

We find in a letter written to a confidential friend at the age of sixteen, a sort of autobiography of these early days, which is sufficiently characteristic to be regarded as truthful in its self-judgment: "Now let me tell you," he says, "what I have been up to this day. They say I was very gentle and docile as a child, and they attribute this mainly to my feeble health; but I account for it in another way. I had a sister, such a beloved sister! who used to take it in turns with my mother to teach me, and whose lessons were so sweet, so well explained, so admirably suited to my childish comprehension, as to be a real delight to me. All things considered, I was pretty good at this period of my life, and with the exception of some trifling peccadilloes I have not much to reproach myself with.

"At seven years old I had a serious illness, which brought me so near death that everybody said I was saved by a miracle; not that I wanted kind care: my dear father and mother hardly left my bedside for fifteen days and nights.

I was on the point of expiring when suddenly I asked for some beer. I had always disliked beer, but it saved me. I recovered, and six months later my sister, my darling sister, died. Oh what a grief that was! Then I began to learn Latin, and to be naughty; really and truly I believe I never was so wicked as at eight years old. And yet I was being educated by a kind father and a kind mother and an excellent brother; I loved them all dearly, and at this period I had no friends outside my family; yet I was obstinate, passionate, disobedient. I was punished, and I rebelled against it. I used to write letters to my mother complaining of my punishments. I was lazy to the last degree, and used to plan all sorts of naughtiness in my mind. This is a true portrait of me as I was on first going to school at nine and a half years old. By degrees I improved; emulation cured my laziness. I was very fond of my master; I had some little success, which encouraged me. I studied with ardour, and at the same time I began to feel some emotions of pride. I must also confess that I exchanged a great number of blows with my companions. But I changed very much for the better when I entered the fifth class. I fell ill, and was obliged to go for a month to the country, to the house of a very kind lady, where I acquired some degree of polish, which I lost in great part soon after.

"I grew rather idle in the fourth class, but I pulled up again in the third. It was then that I made my first Communion. Oh glad and blessed day! may my right hand wither and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I ever forget thee!

"I had changed a good deal by this time; I had become modest, gentle, and docile, more industrious and unhappily also rather scrupulous. I still continued proud and impatient."

Although, looking back from the sustained energy of sixteen to these first beginnings, Frederic accuses himself of laziness, he was considered a diligent little scholar from the time of his entrance into school until his leaving it; but like almost all children endowed with special gifts, there was a disproportion in the way he applied himself,—some studies were irksome and distasteful to him, while others he found attractive and easy. He bestowed special pains, for instance, on his Latin, and displayed such a facility for Latin verses that his teacher, M. Legeay, a veteran classicist of the old school, thought it worth while preserving many of them, some of which he published in a biographical notice after his pupil's death. During his passage through the third and second class, between thirteen and fourteen years of age, Frederic commenced and very nearly completed a voluminous Latin poem on the taking of Jerusalem by Titus. The range of his juvenile muse was wide and ambitious, judging from the specimens preserved by M. Legeay. There were airy flights with the skylark, mystic communings with the moon and the stars, an adieu of Marie Antoinette to the Princess Elizabeth, written in stately Virgilian hexameters, hymns on sacred subjects, tender canticles to the Madonna. "I was often astounded at the strength and elevation of these young flights," says M. Legeay; "his analyses of sacred and ancient history were quite surprising. The subjects where he shone most were those which gave scope for religious and patriotic sentiments."

At fourteen he entered the class of higher studies, and this was to be the signal of a new and painful experience which left its mark on the boy's whole after life. Up to this period he had never known what it was to doubt; his faith had been as placid and as trusting as a child's; but the moment had come when he was to pay for the pre-

cocious maturity of his mind and the lofty flights of his imagination; the intellectual activity which had so quickened his mental powers, suddenly kindled a flame within him that stirred vital questions, and evoked the demon of doubt, that torment of noble and unquiet souls who hunger to believe, and cannot rest until reason has justified belief. Like Pascal and Joubert and other deep thinkers, Frederic was doomed to experience, as he himself described it long years afterwards, "the horror of those doubts that eat into the heart, pursuing us even at night to the pillow we have drenched with our tears." Suddenly, without his being able to discover any immediate cause for it, a change came over him, his childlike peace was overclouded, he began to question, to argue, to all but disbelieve. In a confidential letter to the school-fellow before quoted from, he thus alludes to this crisis: "I must tell you now of a most painful experience which began for me just as I entered on my rhetoric, and which only ended last year. By dint, I suppose, of hearing people talk of infidels and infidelity, I came one day to ask myself why I believed. Doubt presented itself, but I repulsed the doubt, for I felt I *must* believe; I read all the books I knew of which explained and defended religion, but none of them fully satisfied me; I would believe for a month or two on the authority of such and such a teacher, then an objection would start up in my mind, and the doubts returned stronger than ever. Oh my dear ——, how I did suffer! for I wanted to keep my faith. I dipped into Vallar, but Vallar did not satisfy me; my faith was shaken, and yet I preferred to cling to it, to believe without understanding, than to go on doubting, because doubt was such a torture. In this state I began my philosophy. The thesis of 'certainty' bewildered me; it seemed to me for a moment that I might doubt my own existence."

This trial left such a deep impression on him, that Frederic never in after life could allude to it without strong emotion. One day, when the temptation was at its worst, clutching him almost like a physical pain, a sudden impulse drove him towards a church near which he happened to be walking; he quickened his steps, entered, and falling on his knees, prayed with all his soul to be delivered from the trial, promising that if God gave him light to see the truth, he would for ever after devote himself to its defence. While uttering this prayer, he felt that he was committing himself to a distinct pledge, which must colour his whole life, that if his faith were restored to him, his life must be consecrated to its service in no ordinary way. Referring to the circumstance in the last work he ever wrote, with that shuddering sense of a danger escaped which he retained to the last, he says, "The uncertainty of my eternal destiny left me no peace; I clung to the sacred dogmas in desperation, but they seemed to break in my grasp; then it was that the teaching of one who was both a priest and a philosopher saved me; he brought light into my mind; I believed henceforth with an assured faith, and, touched by this mercy, vowed to consecrate my days to the service of that truth which had given me peace."

The philosopher and priest here alluded to was the Abbé Noirot, a man whose wisdom, learning, and seductive piety, made him a power with a generation of young spirits, contemporaries of Ozanam.

M. Ampère says of the Abbé Noirot, "All those who studied under this cherished master agree that he had a particular gift for directing and developing each one in his vocation. He proceeded with his pupils on the Socratic method. When he saw a young rhetorician arrive at his class of philosophy, puffed out with recent success, and as full of importance as ever Euthydemus or Gorgias was, the

Christian Socrates began by bringing the young rhetorician gently to recognise the fact that he knew nothing; and then, when he had crushed him under the weight of his own weakness, he raised him up, and set to work to point out to him what he really could do. The influence of this able master decided the course of Ozanam's mind."

Lacordaire tells us how the master loved to take this favourite scholar as the companion of his walks, and how in their solitary rambles over the steep and lonely roads outside Lyons, the mature philosopher and the boy would forget the lapse of time while they discoursed on deep and lofty themes—God and His dealings with men, being the one they delighted most to dwell on—till the shades of night overtook them, as they hurried homewards.

Frederic was the youngest of the hundred and thirty pupils who studied under the Abbé Noirot; he reached the head of his class very quickly, and remained there till he left. "He was an elect soul," says this venerable master, who still survives, and still, in his eighty-fourth year, charms the young men who seek his wisdom for advice, as their fathers did; "he was marvellously endowed by nature, both in mind and heart; his industry was incredible; he worked all day without intermission, and a part of the night; he was devoted, ardent, and singularly modest; he was cheerful, even gay, but there was always an undercurrent of seriousness in him; he loved a joke dearly, and was sure to be in the midst of any fun going, for there never was a boy more popular with other boys. But I never heard of him being in any mischief; he was most affectionate and sympathetic; I don't believe Frederic was capable of inspiring or harbouring an antipathy; he was, however, very fiery, and had often vehement bursts of indignation, but not against individuals; I never knew

him angry or imbittered against any one; he was simply inaccessible to hatred, except against falsehood or wrong-doing." Such is his portrait at seventeen, as it is inscribed on the memory of one who knew him well, and whose tender admiration for him is as fresh to-day as it was forty years ago.

But these days of study and pleasant companionship were drawing to a close. Frederic had completed his term of philosophy, and was now ready to enter on the study of the law. For this purpose it was necessary for him to go to Paris; but Dr. Ozanam, in spite of the confidence he had in his son's steadiness and principles, shrank, naturally enough, from sending the boy adrift alone on that dangerous sea where so many noble young hearts are daily shipwrecked. It was decided, therefore, that he should wait for a couple of years at Lyons, and be employed meantime in some way which might serve as a preliminary to future studies at the École de Droit. The choice of the intermediate occupation was about the most uncongenial to the young man's taste that could have been made. He was placed as clerk in an attorney's office. Much, however, as he recoiled from the uninteresting nature of the position, he accepted it without repining, and took his seat cheerfully in the dusky office, where there was little to remind him of the poetic and philosophical regions in which he had hitherto dwelt. He worked away as diligently copying law-papers as if they had been so many theses he was preparing for M. Noirot, and listened with deferential patience to the long-winded perorations of the head clerk. But, do what he would, he could find no pleasure in the work; so, when he had done all that duty demanded, he lightened the intervals by studying English, German, Hebrew, and even Sanscrit; in after-office-hours he read also enormously, and even found leisure to write a

treatise against the St. Simonians, which may be said to have struck the key-note of his future literary career. "It was like a preface to the work which was to occupy him to the end of his days," says M. Ampère.

The sect known as the St. Simonians was so called from one of its first enthusiasts, who, after his death, was erected into its founder, no one else being forthcoming to claim the title. The religion of St. Simon was born of the moral and social disorganisation which followed after the revolution of 1830. Its main tactic was to glorify Christianity in the past, while denying and vilifying it in the present, treating it as a worn-out creed, and building up upon its ruins the new religion,—"the religion of the future," as it boldly styled itself. It had made a good deal of noise in various parts of France, fascinating many restless young spirits, who, impatient of the prevailing apathy, and hungering for a faith of some sort, caught eagerly at a creed which seemed to promise a solution of the great social problem. In the course of the winter the St. Simonians came to Lyons, and were reaping there the same ephemeral harvest which had rewarded them elsewhere. Frederic had some passages of arms with them in the columns of the local journals; but, not satisfied with this, he set to work and composed his treatise, which appeared in the month of April 1831, and dealt a heavy blow at the sect he combated. M. de Lamartine, on reading it, wrote at once to congratulate Frederic, observing that his admiration for the talent of the author was heightened by his astonishment at his age. "This beginning," he adds, "promises us a new combatant in the sacred struggle of religious and moral philosophy, which this century is sustaining against a materialistic reaction. Like you, I augur well for the issue. We do not see it, but the voice of conscience, that infallible prophet of the brave man's heart,

promises us that our children shall. Let us trust to this instinctive promise, and live in the future."

Such episodes seem somewhat out of keeping with the pursuits of an attorney's clerk; but Frederic felt that this was only a temporary phase, which might usefully serve as an apprenticeship, but which, meantime, must not absorb him to the exclusion of higher interests. He never lost sight of this fact; and while fulfilling conscientiously his daily task, he was working still more assiduously to prepare himself for the higher one that was awaiting him. He set himself to study the state of society in France, and the knowledge which, even in his present narrow sphere, he gained of it, of the deep-seated evils eating into its heart, filled him with profound pity and an intense longing to help even remotely towards bringing about a better state of things, or at least to cast in his labours with others better competent to deal with so tremendous a problem.

The following letter, written at the age of seventeen and a half, to two college friends, reveals fully his views and ambitions at this period:—

"15*th Jan.* 1831.

". . . You ask what people think here. It would be very difficult for me to tell you. Philosophically speaking, my belief is that in the provinces people don't think at all, or at least very little; they live a life purely industrial and material; everybody looks after his personal comforts, and takes care of number one; and when that personage is satisfied, when the purse is replenished, then people discuss politics quietly by the fireside, or round the billiard-table; there is a great deal of fine talk concerning liberty, about which the talkers themselves understand very little; people praise the conduct of the National Guard and the Schools in the *journées* of December, but they make small account of the protestations and proclamations of the gentle-

men of the École de Droit, who, on the contrary, are severely blamed for attempting to govern the Government, and plant their little republic in the midst of our monarchy. Material order, moderate liberty, bread and money, this is all people want here; they are sick of revolutions and pine for rest; in a word, the men of the provinces are neither men of the past nor men of the future, they are men of the present, 'see-saw men,' as the *Gazette* calls them.

"So much for my surroundings. And after that you want to know what I think; a poor little dwarf like me who sees things from afar, through the newspapers, which are seldom to be trusted, and the still more absurd gossip of our politicians, like a man looking through a bad eye-glass! . . . All I can do is to keep my temper, to read just enough news to know what is going on, to confine myself as much as possible to my individual sphere, to improve my mind while keeping aloof for the present, pursuing my studies outside society, so that I may be able to enter it later with some advantage for others and for myself; this is the line of conduct I have felt compelled to adopt, and which M. Noirot encourages me to persevere in, and which I advise you, my dear friend, to adopt also; for, honestly, we young fellows are too green at present, too insufficiently nourished with the living sap of science, to be able to offer any ripe fruit to society. Let us not make haste, and while the storm throws down many who are on the heights, let us grow quietly in the shade, so that we may prove ourselves full-grown men, full of vigour, when the days of transition shall have passed away, and we shall be wanted. For my part, my choice is made, my plan for the future is sketched out, and, as in friendship bound, I will tell you what it is.

"Like you, I feel that the past is falling to pieces, that the foundations of the old edifice are shaken, and that a

terrible convulsion has changed the face of the earth. But what is to come out of these ruins? Is society to remain buried under the rubbish of its broken thrones, or is it to arise and reappear younger, more brilliant, more beautiful? Shall we behold *novos cœlos et novam terram?* There is the question. I, who believe in Providence, and do not despair of my country, like Charles Nodier, I believe in a sort of palingenesis; but what is to be the form, what is to be the law, of this new order of society, I do not undertake to prophesy.

"Nevertheless, what I feel confident of is, that there exists a Providence, and that that Providence cannot for six thousand years have abandoned reasonable creatures, naturally desirous of the true, the good and the beautiful, to the genius of evil and error; that, consequently, all the creeds of humanity cannot have been mere extravagant delusions, and that there are *truths* scattered over the world. The thing is to discover these truths, and to disengage them from the falsehoods they are mixed up with; we must search the ruins of the old world for the corner-stone on which the new is to be rebuilt. It would be very much like those pillars which historians tell us were raised before the deluge to transmit existing traditions to those who might survive, just as the ark, borne over the waters, bore safely within it the fathers of the human species. But this corner-stone, this pillar of traditions, this lifeboat, where are we to seek for it? Amidst all the notions of antiquity where are we to dig for the only true and legitimate ores? Where must we begin, and where end?

"And here I stop, and set to thinking in this wise: the first want of man, the first want of society, is some notion of a religion. The human heart thirsts for the infinite. Moreover, if there be a God, and if there be men, there must be some connection between them, hence a religion

of some sort; consequently, a primitive revelation; consequently, again, there is a primitive religion, ancient in its origin, essentially divine, and therefore essentially true. This is the inheritance, transmitted from on high to the first man, and from the first man to his descendants, that I am bent on discovering. And I mean to pursue my search through time and space, stirring the dust of tombs, digging up the rubbish of temples, disentombing all the myths from the savages of Cook to the Egypt of Sesostris, from the Indians of Vishnu to the Scandinavians of Odin. I investigate the traditions of every people, I inquire into their reason and origin, and, aided by the lights of geography and history, I recognise in every religion two distinct elements—one variable, individual, secondary, having its origin in the circumstance of time and place in which each people found itself; another immutable, universal, primitive, inexplicable to history and geography; and as this latter element is to be found in all religious creeds, and stands out more complete and pure according as we remount to the most remote antiquity, I conclude that it is this alone which reigned in the early days, and which constitutes the primitive religion of man. I conclude, consequently, that religious truth is that which, spread all over the face of the earth, is to be found amidst all nations, transmitted by the first man to his posterity, then corrupted and mixed up with all sorts of fables and falsehoods.

"This is what I felt society wanted. I was conscious of a corresponding want in myself. I had need of something solid to take hold of, something that I could take root in and cling to, in order to resist the torrent of doubt; and then, oh my friends! my soul was filled with a great joy and a great consolation; for, lo! it discovered, by the sheer force of reason, that this something was none other

than that, Catholicism which was first taught me by my mother, which was dear to my childhood, and so often fed my mind and heart with its beautiful memories, and its still more beautiful hopes,—Catholicism, with all its grandeurs and all its delights! Shaken for a time by doubt, I feel the invincible need to cling, with all my might, to the pillar of the temple, were it even to crush me in its fall; and, lo! I find this same pillar supported by science, luminous with the beams of wisdom, of glory, and of beauty. I find it, and I clasp it with enthusiastic love. I will take my stand by its side, and there, stretching out my arm, I will point to it as a beacon of deliverance to those who are tossing on the sea of life. Happy shall I be if a few friends come and rally round me. Then we should unite our efforts, and create a work together, others would join us, and, perchance, the day would come when all mankind would be gathered together beneath the same protecting shade. Catholicism, in its eternal youth and strength, would rise suddenly on the world, and, placing itself at the head of the age, lead it on to civilisation and to happiness. Oh my friends! I feel overcome in speaking to you; I am filled with intellectual delight, for the work is magnificent, and I am young. I have great hopes, and I believe that the day will come when I shall have nourished and strengthened my thought, and shall be able to express it worthily. Yes, the preliminary labours have already opened out to me the vast perspective which I have unfolded to you, and over which my imagination soars transported with joy. But it is a small thing to contemplate the career I have to run; the thing is to start on the road, for the hour is at hand. If I mean to write a book at five-and-thirty, I must begin to prepare for it at eighteen, for the preliminary studies are multitudinous. Just see what an amount of study it involves! I must

acquire twelve languages, so as to be able to consult sources and documents. I must be fairly master of geology and astronomy, in order to discuss the chronological and cosmogonical systems of peoples and *savans*. I must master universal history in all its breadth, and the history of religious creeds in all its depth. This is what I have to do before I arrive at worthily expressing my idea. I dare say you will exclaim at the audacity of this poor fellow Ozanam, and compare him to the frog in La Fontaine, and to the *ridiculus mus* in Horace. Just as you like! I, too, was aghast for a moment at my own boldness; but what is one to do? When an idea has taken hold of you, and possesses your whole mind for two years, are you free to withstand it? When a voice keeps continually crying out to you,—*Do this; I so will it*—can you bid it be silent?

"Besides, I have laid my whole scheme before M. Noirot, who encourages me to carry it out; and when I urged that perhaps I should find the task too heavy, he assured me that I should meet with numbers of studious young men ready to assist me with their advice and their labour. And then, my friends, I thought of you."

How thoroughly single-minded Frederic was in his grand schemes of religious championship appears in many letters of the same date, where he lays bare his heart to the young friends whom he was seeking to enlist in his chivalrous design.

"Your ideas of glory are natural enough in a young man," he writes to M. Falconnet, his cousin; "we must not make it our aim, but accept it as a happy result. Man, loving his own existence, longs to perpetuate it; he lives again in his children, he lives again in his works, he seems to live again in the hearts of all who bless his name. True glory consists in the gratitude of posterity. Just as

the righteous man does not bestow his gifts to obtain gratitude, yet nevertheless accepts its tribute with a sweet sense of satisfaction; so should the true philosopher, the Christian, never act in view of glory, while at the same time he cannot remain insensible to it. Hence it is, that as ingratitude and oblivion sometimes follow the greatest benefits, the just man builds his hopes higher, and awaits both reward and glory from an incorruptible Judge: he appeals from ungrateful men to God, who never fails."

Ozanam was blessed by nature with a singularly contented disposition as regarded external circumstances, although, as we shall see, his soul was naturally unquiet, and often "troubled within him."

He was poor, and he was contented to remain so. There seldom was a young man, conscious of high intellectual gifts, who began life freer from the mere ambition of making money, and a position, in the worldly sense. "I often thank God," he says, "for having placed me in one of those positions on the confines of indigence and independence, where one is inured to privations without being absolutely shut out from enjoyments; where one runs no risk of becoming stultified by the indulgence of every wish, and where, on the other hand, one is not distracted by the clamourings of want. God knows what a snare my weak nature would have found in the enervating influence of the wealthy classes, or in the sordid privations of indigence."

CHAPTER II.

1831.

Dr. Ozanam, who had cause probably to realise the unadvisability of condemning Frederic any longer to the obscurity of his present employment, suddenly determined to abridge the term of delay, and sent him to Paris to begin his legal studies towards the close of the year 1831, Frederic being then in his eighteenth year.

His first experience of the new life, which had looked so attractive in the distance, was anything but pleasant. Paris was a very different place then from what it is now. The young Catholic student coming to Paris now finds no lack of centres where he can claim welcome and companionship, and at once lose the sense of his isolation in the warmth of a common faith and common struggles. But it was not so just after the revolution of 1830 had convulsed society to its base, and destroyed all cohesion. All who could leave the capital had fled, and security was not yet sufficiently re-established to lure them back from the quiet of the provinces to a city which, then as now, was the recognised centre of disturbance and disorder, the hearth from which the spark flew to set the fire abroad. Parents were terrified to let their sons return to Lyceums and Colleges where atheism reigned supreme; and, rather than expose their faith to the risk it must run in such an atmosphere, and under such influences, they kept them at home, out of harm's way, hoping that the effects

of the storm would pass away, and fairer weather gradually return. They began to perceive, however, that this hope, if it did not ultimately prove vain, was likely to be indefinitely deferred; so it became a question of depriving their sons of all liberal education, and thus closing the door of every honourable career to them, or of sending them back to the public schools, and taking the consequences. The greater number were still hovering between these two alternatives when Frederic Ozanam came to Paris. On entering the classes of the École de Droit he found that he and three others were the only Christian students who attended them.

His first feeling on discovering that his life was for the next few years to be cast amongst young men who were either avowed atheists, or rationalists, or St. Simonians, was a painful one. Fresh from the pure atmosphere of a Christian home, and animated by an ardent love of his faith, he could not bear the idea of daily companionship with those who made open profession of hating Christianity, who scoffed at its doctrines and blasphemed its Divine Founder. Yet there was no choice between this and complete isolation, which, to a sympathetic nature like his, seemed unbearable; nevertheless, he bravely chose the latter, and for the first months of his residence in Paris he kept aloof from all intimacies, and as far as possible from all acquaintance with his fellow-students.

He had at first not even the compensation of a cheerful fireside to return to after his hard day's work. Madame Ozanam had deputed an old friend to look out for a quiet boarding-house, where her son would be comfortable, and where he would have some safe and cheerful society in the evenings. The old friend's choice proved an unlucky one, as we learn from Frederic's first letter to his mother, dated from his new abode, November 7, 1831:—

"... Here I am alone, without any amusement or any

sort of consolation. I, so used to fireside talks, who took such pleasure in seeing every day around me those dear ones who love me; I, so terribly in need of advice and encouragement, behold me cast unprotected, without a rallying-point of any sort, into this great capital of egotism, this vortex of human passions and errors! The few young men whom I know[1] are too far off for me to see them often. I have no one to pour out my heart to but you, my dearest mother,—you and God . . .; but these two are all in all to me. I have a thousand things to say to you, but where shall I begin? I am installed, since Saturday, in a little room looking to the south, and near the Jardin des Plantes. This sounds very nice, but it is not so in reality; I am very uncomfortable. I am a long way off from the law schools, the lending libraries, from the centre of my studies, and my Lyonnese friends; then my landlady strikes me as a sly gossip; her talk and her manners lead me to suspect that she looks very lovingly on a young man's purse. Lastly, and this is my chief grievance, the society is not good. There are *dames* and *demoiselles* boarders also, who have their meals at our table, who keep the conversation to themselves, and whose tone and manners are extremely vulgar; from my room I hear them just now roaring with laughter; they congregate every evening in the drawing-room to play cards, and pressed me very much to join them, but, as you may imagine, I declined. These people are neither Christians nor Turks. I am the only one who abstains,[2]—a circumstance which diverts them exceedingly. You will let me know what you think of all this, and whether you wish me to look out and make some other arrangement for myself."

[1] Some young friends from Lyons, come to Paris to study like himself, but who lived at the other extremity of the city.

[2] That is, observes the Friday fast.

He then proceeds to relate his impressions of Paris :—

"I have seen the Pantheon, that strange monument, a pagan temple in the midst of a city whose inhabitants are either Christians or atheists; its magnificent cupola is widowed of the cross that once crowned it, and the sombre tint of its superb façade indicates an origin far anterior to its present extravagant destination. What does it mean, in truth, a tomb without a cross, and a sepulchre where no religious idea prevails? If death be but a material phenomenon that leaves no hope behind it, what sense is there in these honours rendered to dry bones and flesh falling into corruption? The religion of the Pantheon is nothing but a comedy, like that of Reason and Liberty. But the people must have a faith, and when the faith of the Gospel was torn from them there was nothing for it but to fabricate another for them, even if it is made up of madness and imbecility.

"I was amply compensated for these sad reflections by the beauty of the church of St. Étienne du Mont, my parish, the pomp of its ceremonies and the magnificence of the singing and the organ. A thrill of delight ran through my whole being when I heard that instrument of a thousand voices resounding beneath the Gothic roof, glorifying God, and chanting forth His praises, as David says, on the harp and the cithern, on flutes and trumpets. How great the power of music is, and how sublime and beautiful the Catholic faith that inspires it!"

The post did not travel so quickly forty years ago as it does now-a-days, and before an answer could arrive from Lyons the forlorn student was rescued from his uncomfortable quarters by an unforeseen piece of good fortune. He had met once the celebrated mathematician, M. Ampère, at the house of a friend at Lyons, and taking advantage of the great man's kindly invitation to come and see him

when he came to Paris, Frederic called upon him a few days after the date of the above letter.

André Marie Ampère was a very great man indeed, a member of the Institute, and of a number of other learned societies, as well as an unrivalled luminary in his own person; but it was a greatness unalloyed by a tinge of pedantry or hauteur. Frederic approached him with a certain trepidation, but he was quickly put at his ease by the frank cordiality of the untidy old *savan*, and before many minutes was pouring out the tale of his domestic grievances as to an old friend. M. Ampère listened with attention, then, rising suddenly, he threw wide open a door of the *salon*, and said, pointing to the room within, "Come and look at this room, and tell me how you like it." It was a large, comfortably furnished bedroom, looking on the garden. Frederic replied that he liked it very much. "Then come and take possession of it, it is heartily at your disposal," said M. Ampère; "you can pay me what you are paying at your *pension*, and I hope you will be better off; you will make the acquaintance of my son,[1] who is occupied studying German literature; his library meantime is at your disposal; you abstain, so do we; my sister and my daughter dine with us, that will be a little society for you. What do you say to the plan?"

Frederic said it was almost too delightful to be real, and that he would write at once to his father about it. The reply was such as might have been anticipated; and a month later the student writes home in high spirits, describing his new manner of life, and enclosing a plan of his room, with its furniture and ornaments, for his mother. "You will all laugh," he says, "but I am sure the scrawl will amuse mamma; she can now fancy me seated at my

[1] Then absent at a German University; this room was the one he occupied when at home.

table, getting into bed, going from my table to fetch a block of wood, and putting it into my stove!

"We breakfast at ten, and dine at half-past five, all together,—M. Ampère, his daughter and sister. M. Ampère talks a good deal, and his conversation is amusing and always instructive; since I have been here (two days), I have already learned many things from him. His daughter talks cleverly, and takes part in all that is said; M. Ampère is very caressing in his manner to her, but he never speaks to her about anything but science. He has a prodigious memory for everything scientific, in every conceivable department of knowledge, but he never remembers anything connected with the *ménage*. He learned Latin all by himself, and began to write Latin verses only two years ago, and does it remarkably well. He has a wonderful knowledge of history, and reads a dissertation on the hieroglyphics with as much pleasure as a description of some experiment in physics and natural history. All this comes to him like intuition. The discoveries which have raised him to the pinnacle where he stands to-day came to him all at once, he tells me. He is just now finishing a grand plan for an Encyclopædia. Are you not glad, my dear father, to have me under the roof of this kind and excellent man? I forgot to tell you that the most perfect politeness reigns in the family. I also forgot to give you my address; here it is —19 Rue des Fossés St. Victor."

His residence with M. Ampère brought Frederic into contact with the most distinguished men of science and letters of the day; they all seem to have treated the modest young student with a kindness and condescension which charmed him. "All these *savans* of Paris are full of affability," he informs his mother; "yesterday I saw M. Serullas,[1] a most worthy man, gifted in the highest

[1] Professor of Chemistry at Val-de-Grace.

degree with scientific absence of mind. I found him in the midst of some chemical manipulations, which he took care not to interrupt while receiving me very graciously, and treating me every now and then, as he said, to an explosion of fragments of potassium; but he was not in tune, his experiments were not successful. It is surprising how learned everybody is here! You see I have turned optimist; in my last letter I was a pessimist, because I was worried; everything seemed to me to be going wrong. But now that things are quiet at Lyons, and that I have society and a room to my fancy, and the prospect of books and fire and money—what more can I want? You, my dear father, you, and all my family; oh, this is what I still want, and what I long ardently for. What a happiness it will be to embrace you in eight months from this!"

Amongst the celebrities whom Frederic always reckoned it a privilege to have come in contact with at this period of his life, was M. de Châteaubriand. He had been furnished with a letter of introduction to the great man on coming to Paris, but he kept it nearly two months before he had the courage to present it. At last, on New Year's Day, he put it in his pocket and sallied forth before twelve o'clock, determined to take the desperate step. His heart beat violently as he rang at the door of the man whom Charles the Tenth had called "one of the powers of this world." M. de Châteaubriand had just come in from mass; he received his timid visitor with the most winning grace, questioned him with lively interest concerning his studies, his tastes, his future plans and prospects; then, fixing a peculiar look on him, he inquired whether he had yet been to any of the theatres. Frederic replied that he had not. "And do you intend to go?" asked M. de Châteaubriand, with his eye still bent on him. Frederic hesitated

for a moment; he had promised his mother not to go, and he never dreamed of breaking his word, but he was afraid of appearing ridiculous in the eyes of the great poet if he confessed this; the struggle, however, was brief; he replied frankly that he had resolved never to put his foot inside a theatre, and why. A beam of satisfaction lighted up M. de Châteaubriand's face, and stooping forward he embraced the young man with emotion. "I implore you to be true to that promise to your mother," he said; "you would gain nothing at the theatre, and you might lose a great deal."

Frederic counted this little episode amongst the many signal kindnesses which Providence placed in his path at the perilous moment of his *début* in Paris. Henceforth, when any of his freethinking companions proposed his accompanying them to the play, he would answer boldly, and without fear of ridicule, "M. de Châteaubriand advised me strongly not to go, and I promised him I would not."

But indeed from the day he entered on his studies in Paris, his time was so completely filled up that there was little margin left for such amusements, had he been inclined for them. He worked all day, and continued to encroach frequently on his night's rest, to prepare the labours of the morrow. Moreover, the dream which had illuminated the dusky precincts of the attorney's office for nearly a year was still dominant in his mind, guiding all his efforts, overshadowing all minor ambitions: the desire to do something, to help in doing something, for God and his fellow-creatures. This was the aim of all his studies, —to fit himself for some mission of usefulness, to whose success his personal interest and success as a student, or even later as a barrister, must remain absolutely subordinate. No wonder that these lofty aspirations and deep musings engendered a sort of tender melancholy in his ardent soul, compressed as he was by circumstances so little

favourable to his wide humanitarian ambitions. He writes to Falconnet:—"I have been here now a fortnight in possession of a charming room, with a hospitable table, pleasant society, and the conversation of my host, which is always instructive, and often amusing; one class of law and two of literature a day; the frequent society of Henri.[1] Surely this is more than enough to make a student's life happy! and yet—if you think I am happy you are mistaken. I am not happy; I am conscious of an immense void, an indescribable *malaise*. . . . I dislike Paris because there is no life here, no faith, no love; it is like a huge corpse to which my youth is chained alive, and whose icy coldness freezes, while its corruption poisons me. It is in the midst of this moral desert that one understands fully and repeats ardently that cry of the Psalmist:—

'Habitavi cum habitantibus Cedar, multum incola fuit anima mea!
Si oblitus fuero tui, Jerusalem, adhæreat lingua mea faucibus meis!'

"These accents of immortal poetry resound often in my soul; this vast city where I am, as it were, lost, is to me Kedar, Babylon, the land of exile and pilgrimage, while Sion is my native town, with its provincial simplicity, the charity of its inhabitants, its altars erect, and its faith respected. Science and Catholicism are my only consolations, and assuredly they are noble ones; but here also I find hopes deceived, obstacles to be overcome, difficulties to be conquered. *You know of old my longing to surround myself with young men feeling and thinking as I do; I know that there are such, many such, but they are scattered 'like gold on the dunghill,' and the task of gathering defenders under one flag is proverbially a difficult one.* I hope never-

[1] Henri Pessonneaux, his cousin, a young man of high moral and intellectual endowments, and devotedly attached to Frederic.

theless, in one of my next letters, to be able to give you some more definite hopes on this head.

"How do we stand at present regarding scientific ideas? what is the position of the schools, the belligerent powers in the field of philosophy?

"We must first consider that after all our disputes and struggles, after all partial problems, a moment must come when reason sums up all her doubts into one, and proposes the grand general problem. In our day this problem may be thus expressed, What was man made for? What the aim and the law of humanity? Considered with regard to the past century, there is progress, since the very terms of the problem imply the existence of a providence, an aim, a creative and conservative idea. The question at this stage appeals for its solution to philosophy and history. You can understand the immense importance attached in these days to historical studies. Up to this point everybody is agreed; but here they split, the division being caused by the very premises of the question. One side takes psychology as the basis of its researches, and builds up to itself a sort of abstract man after the fashion of Condillac's statue. In this man it sees all it wishes to see, and hence deduces a philosophical formula on which it spreads out history as on a sort of Procrustes-bed, cutting and hacking all that has any difficulty in fitting into its inflexible frame. These people, who are but following after Rousseau, Dupuys, and Volney, have lighted on the admirable discovery that all religions began with fetichism, and they go about proclaiming it to whoever has ears to hear, holding forth about the law of progress, the extinction of Christianity, and the approaching advent of a new religion. This is what Professor Jouffroy preached to us only the other day at the Sorbonne, that ancient Sorbonne which was founded by Christianity, and whose dome is still crowned with the sign of the Cross.

"But in opposition to this school, which calls itself the Rationalistic, another has sprung up by the name of the Traditional, not because it has repudiated reason, but because history is the groundwork and tradition the starting-point of its system. In its ranks are enrolled MM. de Châteaubriand, de Lamennais, d'Ekstein, Ballanche, de Bonald; and in Germany, Schlegel, Baader, Stolberg, Goerres. They distinguish two aims of human knowledge, the finite and the infinite, philosophical truth and religious truth; two ways of knowing, reason and belief, analysis and synthesis, or perhaps, as the Church defines it, the order of nature and the order of grace. Now, the finite is pressed upon on all sides by the infinite; the infinite is God, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. Hence it follows that synthesis is at once the basis and the crown of humanity, and that religious truth is the source and final end of philosophical truth. From these premises there springs up a vast theory concerning the relations of science and faith, and a wide explanation of history. And as synthesis is the primitive fact which precedes all knowledge, it follows that psychology is incapable of sounding the depth of nature, or grasping her breadth. It is therefore in history that we must pursue our researches and our study of her; it is history which must tell us the history of mankind. They assert, moreover, that fetichism, far from being the first step of humanity, is the last degree of corruption; that souvenirs of the age of gold, and of the first fault, and of expiation by blood, are sown everywhere amongst the peoples. This is their theory. Meantime our work is maturing in the young Catholic minds, and will appear in its fulness at the appointed time. Never was a history of human religion more imperatively called for by social needs.

"*Tempus erit. . . .*"

CHAPTER III.

1831.

In order to understand the social conditions which Ozanam describes, and which stirred him to such dismay and compassion, it is necessary that we should glance back to the opening of the nineteenth century, and realise what was the state of religious feeling in France just after the Revolution had subsided, and left the country still heaving from the storm which had uprooted all her old beliefs and traditions, and overturned her civil and religious institutions, and built up out of these ruins an edifice of order, where the first essential element of order was wanting.

When Napoleon came and took the destinies of France in hand, religion, in so far as the state and the nation at large were concerned, had ceased to exist; it was practically abolished; its temples were turned into stables and warehouses, or else profaned by monstrous rites and revolting orgies, in the name of the goddess Reason; no external sign bore witness to any covenant between heaven and earth; there was no religious instruction to be had anywhere; children grew up like animals without souls; the remnants of the clergy were scattered through the provinces, officiating in holes and corners, hiding from the hostile and ubiquitous police of the republic, mistrusting as spies those who came furtively to implore their ministry; a certain number of constitutional priests in Paris were feebly attempting to blow a spark from the cold ashes of a

Church pulverised by the Revolution. There were still, no doubt, noble examples of fidelity to the faith to be found throughout the country, but these were exceptions to the general rule of atheism and freethinking. The Church had fallen into contempt long before contempt had translated itself into the active hostility and open violence of the Revolution. The Church—or what has in all ages been identified with her, for glory or for shame, the clergy—had lost their hold upon public esteem. There were saints amongst them in those days, as there always have been, but there was, on the surface, a class of men, such as the *abbés de cour*, who, by their crimes and follies, had become identified with the *régime* whose corruption eventually brought about its own downfall, dragging the Church with it, and shattering the sacred edifice so terribly that, to human eyes, the ruin of the altar seemed as complete and irreparable as the ruin of the throne. Even those who believed in the immortality of the Church herself, confessed, with sorrow, that in France her reign was over. The admission, sad as it was, implied no disloyalty towards the faith. Faith can never die; the Word of God is immortal, but no particular spots on earth have been assigned as its dwelling-place, or the shrine of its eternal presence. Africa had held it once, and so had Antioch and Jerusalem and Constantinople; but a time came when the divine guest passed away from these lands, the current of the stream was turned aside, and mysteriously diverted into other channels. Had the time come when France, so long the fountain of Christianity, was to see the waters flow out of her midst, and depart irrevocably to fertilise distant and more faithful lands? The history of other peoples was there to show a precedent for this dispensation, and there were few signs to bid the most sanguine hope that the kingdom of Clovis and St. Louis was not doomed to

share the fate which had overtaken the country of St. Augustine.

There was one man, one only, in whose hands, as far as human judgment could see, the power was vested of averting the final catastrophe; but he was abroad, busy with other conquests than those of the kingdom which is not of this world. He was destroying the armies of Europe, overturning thrones, keeping the eyes of all nations fixed on him with terror and amazement. France looked on in wild exultation; everything connected with her brilliant young hero partook of the character of a gigantic legend; popular enthusiasm clothed him with the prestige of a demigod. No conqueror ever returned to his native country armed with a mightier power over her destinies for good or for evil than Napoleon after the campaigns of Egypt and Italy. Those who knew him best could hardly hope that he would use it well; that is to say nobly, disinterestedly, patriotically, like a man who loses sight of himself and his personal ambitions in the profound sense of the responsibility of his mission. Except to those immediately about him, little was known in France of Napoleon's character and opinions beyond that he was a republican and a great military commander; the official reports of his harangues and proclamations which appeared in the *Moniteur* were not full or honest enough to reveal him to the public at home as he was known to his generals and the army. It was not known, for instance, that he boasted loudly in the East of having "overturned the Cross;" or that in addressing the Arabs he had said, "We also are true Mussulmans. Have we not destroyed the Pope, who wanted us to declare war against the Mussulmans?"[1] But it was known and remembered by many, that a year before, in his speech at the Luxembourg, he had declared "religion

[1] Manifesto of July 2, 1798.

to be one of those prejudices which the French people had yet to overcome" (Christmas 1797). Almost anything might be expected from so elastic a believer; but no one was prepared for what really did come.

On the 18th of June 1800, four days after the battle of Marengo, Napoleon assisted publicly at a solemn *Te Deum* in the cathedral of Milan, and on coming out observed jocosely to his staff, that "the atheists of Paris would be furious when they heard of it." And he said truly; they were.

A priest named the Abbé Fournier[1] was one of the first to hear of the extraordinary occurrence, and, in a sermon which he preached the next day at St. Roch, he announced it to his audience in an impassioned and picturesque form; he evoked the image of a young hero, who, after gathering glory on a thousand battle-fields, was suddenly overpowered by a sense of gratitude to the God of armies, and flew publicly to invoke His blessing on France and the victorious soldiers who were about to return to her.

The republic was so shocked at the scandalous libel, that the Abbé Fournier was immediately arrested as a madman, carried off to the lunatic asylum of Charenton, dressed in the humiliating costume of its inmates, and locked up.

It required the influence of several statesmen, including Portalis, to obtain his deliverance after eight days' detention. Meantime the truth of the supposed libel had travelled to Paris; four months later the Abbé Fournier was named a bishop, and about a year later the Concordat was signed.

This great transaction, which M. Thiers speaks of as "the most important which the Court of Rome ever concluded with France, perhaps with any Christian power," and which, if we are to believe the Abbé Pradt, Napoleon often

[1] See introduction to Concordat by Portalis.

spoke of as the greatest mistake of his reign,[1] gave almost universal dissatisfaction to the French people. The republicans were furious, because the re-establishment of the Church was like the triumph of royalism, and the defeat and humiliation of the Revolution.

The royalists were angry, because the Concordat robbed them of their chief grievance, and broke the strongest weapon in their hand; hitherto the cause of royalty had been synonymous with that of the Church, henceforth it ceased to be so.

The philosophers were indignant, because it belied their triumphant prophecies concerning the death of Christianity, and its final burial under the reign of atheism and reason.

The Constitutional clergy[2] were angry, because it placed them in a false position; the rank they held from the Revolution was now compromised, perhaps nullified.

The faithful clergy, who might have had real grounds for rejoicing, were afraid to do so; they dared not trust the treaty; it might prove after all but an exchange of bondage. Time showed how much sagacity there was in this instinctive mistrust, which at the moment was regarded as treasonable by the suggesters of the new treaty.

Few measures, perhaps, have been more diversely judged by history than this of the Concordat. The enemies of Napoleon ridicule and condemn it as an elaborate piece of hypocrisy, while his admirers extol it as the wisest and grandest achievement of his reign. It was undeniably an admirable piece of statecraft; a measure of policy worthy of the deep and lofty mind that compiled the Code Napoléon.

We have no reason to believe that Napoleon was actuated by higher motives, by respect for the Church, and belief in her supernatural vitality; but his actions proved

[1] Les quatre Concordats.

[2] Those who took the oath to the Civil Constitution.

on many occasions that he was not devoid of the religious sense, although it may not have carried him beyond a certain instinctive superstition. On the other hand, his knowledge of human nature and of the history of mankind taught him to recognise the absolute necessity of a Church of some sort in every State, of an altar where the people could meet and worship, a God whom, if they did not love, they would at least fear, and who would serve the purposes of state by constituting a kind of supreme court of appeal, whose tribunal, having its seat in the conscience of the citizen, would facilitate the exercise of the law, and bring its influence to bear on the governed and the governing alike. Starting from this general principle, Napoleon was, moreover, clear-sighted enough to discern the radical Catholicism of France, and to see that no other religion could ever supply or supplant the old one in the heart of the people. "Ninety-three" had done its best, and that best had been terrible, but it had not succeeded in crushing the seeds of Catholicism out of the soil, so as to leave it ready for the sowing of a new faith; the Catholic Church, despised, decimated, downtrodden as she was, had still an inalienable hold on the hearts and consciences of the people; she was still, therefore, a power to be reckoned with, and it is to the credit of the legislator's genius at least that, surrounded as he was by atheists and scoffers, and himself personally careless enough on the score of religion, he saw and acknowledged this fact. Unbelief was rampant in all classes, more especially in the educated ones, but Napoleon was not deceived by this surface aspect of the national mind. Since the State must have a religion, that religion could be no other than the Catholic.

The Concordat of 1801 was the practical expression of this belief. Napoleon was never a devout, perhaps not even a sincere, Catholic, but he never failed to exhibit in public

respect for the religion he professed; he upheld it as a necessary element in good and sound government; he regarded it as the most valuable police a nation can maintain, an institution not to be served by, but to serve, the State. His subsequent conduct towards the Holy See was quite consistent with these opinions, was in fact their logical outcome. The official history of the Concordat, and the correspondence between its author and Portalis connected with its execution, attests at every page that, as First Consul and as Emperor, Napoleon regarded the clergy and the hierarchy very much in the light of a body-guard of soldiers and mayors; the bishops, "my bishops," were so many mitred prefects in command of an army of minor functionaries—the priests,—with a Minister of Public Worship holding command over all. A *sous-préfet* under the second Empire was a more independent personage than a bishop under the first. The latter could not leave his diocese for a day without permission from the Minister of Public Worship, who could not grant it without the authorisation of the First Consul. The Bishop of Meaux, the successor of Bossuet, was suffering from a severe attack of ophthalmia, and had to wait some time for leave to go to Paris for medical assistance; it came at last direct from Napoleon himself, and coupled with an injunction that the bishop should "occupy himself diligently with the affairs of his diocese while in Paris."

The same petty despotism was exercised, as far as possible, towards the Holy See. No decree of the Sovereign Pontiff was valid, or even made public, until it had received the sanction of the Government,—a system which placed the clergy in the constant dilemma of having to choose between obedience to the Church and the mandates of the Pope, and their allegiance as citizens to the civil power. Such a state of things was calculated to test

severely the mettle of the ecclesiastical body, and it must be said to their honour that, as a body, they came nobly out of the ordeal. Not a few were found who rendered to Cæsar more than Cæsar's due, but the great majority contrived to ally prudence with becoming independence, and to maintain the dignity of their sacred character intact. We must bear in mind, in order to appreciate this fact as it deserves, that it was long since the political and social state of France had been favourable to the growth of dignity and independence, or to the formation of manliness of character. The reign of Louis XV. had not been a school for confessors, though the timid priesthood of that dissolute reign would no doubt have furnished its contingent of martyrs had they been called for then, as they were later by the Revolution. Napoleon, on his advent to power, found a clergy who had been inured to suffer and trained to die, but who had lost the art of fighting. His quick sagacity detected the weak point in the shield, and hit there. He began by professing unqualified respect for the doctrines of the Church, guessing well that if he had laid the tip of his finger on that sacred deposit the bishops would have defied him, and laid their heads upon the block rather than capitulate on the smallest point; but when he issued a decree ordering them to send in their pastorals to be overlooked by the prefect before being read to their flocks, it never entered their heads to demur; at any rate they did not, although the tyranny was the more absurd and offensive from the fact of the prefect being frequently a Protestant, and still oftener an atheist. The decree continued in force all through the Consulate and under the Empire.[1]

Minute and stringent laws were enacted concerning reli-

[1] *L'Église Romaine et le premier Empire*, par M. d'Haussonville, t. v. pp. 272-276.

gious institutions. No community of men or women, whether for prayer, teaching, or the service of the sick and poor, could be opened in France until the rules and statutes of the order had been investigated and indorsed by Napoleon and Portalis; and there is something cynically comic in the way the latter, in his reports to the Emperor, discusses the purpose, organisation, utility, and dangers of the religious life, the first elements of which were as familiar to him probably as the household arrangements of the Grand Lama.

The Press, that other powerful engine in the State, was not likely to be allowed more liberty than the Church. It was gagged, and became a mere tool in the hands of the Government. The few journalists who refused the general tribute of flattery and obsequiousness were dismissed from their posts, their journals were suppressed or given in to other hands.

The department of Public Instruction remained next to be dealt with, and nothing could be more summary than the way in which it was done. Every vestige of liberty which the Revolution had spared was swept away. Under the Revolution and the Consulate the rights of parents at least were respected; the State opened schools, but it left parents free to send their children there or not; secular and religious schools had fair play from the Government, and were not interfered with.[1] With the Empire all this was changed. Liberty of teaching was so completely abolished that the right of opening a school of any description, for any class of scholars, became the exclusive monopoly of the State. The Imperial University was founded, and replaced all previous institutions of the sort. Christian parents had to choose between the privation of all education for their sons, or the almost certain ruin of their

[1] See Foisset's *Life of Lacordaire*, vol. i.

faith; as a rule they adopted the latter, and generally with the result foreseen. Let home training be ever so careful, it could not be expected to resist the influence of the majority, of those imperious and sympathetic tyrants, companions of their own age, who so powerfully supplemented the teaching, direct and indirect, of Professors for the most part infidels, and, at any rate, always chosen without the slightest regard to their religious principles.

Such a system of education was in truth a sort of conscription of souls, as arbitrary and far more fatal than those *levées en masse* which the great captain was accustomed to raise for the maintenance of his armies. The only possible remedy for such a state of things would have been free competition, and this was rigorously proscribed. By a decree of 1809, the most obscure village school was compelled to choose between suppression, or the official badge of the imperial schoolmaster. The letters of M. de Lamennais to Bruté show us what a superfluity of zeal the Government thought it worth while to expend on hunting down a few humble village priests who ventured to help some young Breton peasants in preparing for the seminary by teaching them the rudiments of Latin. These very seminaries, which the charity of the Church opened to this humble class of students, were placed under the control of the Imperial University, whose authority decided the choice of the masters, and obliged the scholars to follow the classes of the infidel Lyceums and Colleges.

The Empire went further still. It created purely civil faculties of theology, with the right of conferring grades, the possession of which was made a *sine qua non* for obtaining ecclesiastical dignities; while the men who conferred these grades were obliged to swear obedience to the Grand Master of the University, M. de Fontanes,—a wily and bold

stratagem for transferring superior theological training from the Church, where it naturally resides, into the hands of the Imperial University.

Napoleon writes to his Minister of Public Worship:[1] "A priest who has never been under any other superintendence than that of his ecclesiastical superiors cannot occupy a position of the first rank unless the University confers it on him, which it may decline to do in the event of his being known to hold ultramontane opinions, or others dangerous to authority."

So comprehensive a scheme of spiritual tyranny has no precedent in ancient or modern history, and yet this yoke was borne by France all through the Empire, under the specious pretext that it was the safeguard of national unity.

The department of morals fared no better than that of dogma. Napoleon established divorce, thereby violently outraging the law of the Church. Portalis issued a decree forbidding priests to refuse the blessing of the Church to persons who chose to marry again after being divorced.

The Sabbath was altered from the seventh day to the tenth,[2] not perhaps so much as a measure of political economy, as from Napoleon's desire to show his power to set aside a time-honoured law of Christendom. His efforts proved a failure. It is still related in parts of France how the very oxen resented the violation of the Divine law, and knew the day of rest instinctively, moaning and lowing in expostulation as they drew the plough reluctantly through the fields.

The story of the Concordat of Fontainebleau has been told too often, and too exhaustively, to need more than passing mention here. But we read history superficially,

[1] *Correspondance*, tom. xiii. p. 15, St. Cloud, 30 Juillet 1806.

[2] See Leçon 7me, suite du 4me Commandement.

and too often by the light of our own prejudices and the spirit of our times; and many of us, in judging of this event, are apt to overlook the main features of the case, the long series of harassing persecution that prepared it, the crafty system of oppression, treachery, and humiliation which brought the clergy of France into that state of unworthy subjection, which was the primary condition and prelude of the Concordat.

The old man at the Vatican was the *bête noire* of the man who had brought all the crowned heads of Europe, except one, to bow down to him. Napoleon hated him as Haman hated Mordecai, for, like that stiff-necked Jew, who sat at the gate in his rags, and defied the oppressor of his people, the Pope remained the permanent affirmation of a power that defied Cæsar, and withstood alike his bribes and his threats. Nothing had been left undone to bring this stubborn power into subjection,—caresses, bribes, insults, imprisonment, and exile; but so far everything had failed. Pius VII. had now been four years a prisoner at Fontainebleau, his dominions confiscated, his spiritual action virtually arrested, for he was cut off from all external relations with the clergy and with Christendom, and from the power of carrying on the government of the Church. Napoleon governed it in France according to his own views; but he had now come to a difficult pass: death was thinning the ranks of the hierarchy, and how was he to replenish them without the Pope? He had recourse to one of his characteristic expedients. He convoked an assembly of Italian and French bishops—"his bishops"—in Paris, gave it the name of a National Council, and ordered it forthwith to pass a decree, whereby, if the Pope did not, within six months, institute a certain number of bishops, named by the Emperor, they should be consecrated by the Metropolitan.

The bishops, scared by the audacity of the order, sought to gain time, and timidly proposed that they should draw up a report on the imperial proposal, and refer the case by deputation to the august captive of Fontainebleau. Napoleon met this act of rebellion by one of those paroxysms of imperial anger which he had often found effective when other arguments failed, and without condescending to further expostulation, declared the National Council dissolved. Three of the members were seized that night and carried off to Vincennes, and detained there until they sent in their resignation of their respective sees. The other bishops, before they had recovered from the panic caused by this violent proceeding, were summoned one by one into the presence of the Minister of Police, and terrified into pledging themselves to deliver up the hierarchy into the hands of their imperial master.

Napoleon, pacified by this act of submission, once more convened his National Council, and this time the shameful decree went through the mockery of a discussion, and was passed.

It is alleged, in extenuation of the cowardly behaviour of the bishops, that they were told the Pope had yielded his assent; but the monstrous falsehood never should, never could, have imposed upon them for a moment; their conscience, as well as their experience, must have told them it was a lie and an impossibility.

Pius VII. had been at this date four years in confinement, cut off from every friendly face, from all knowledge of whatever was going on outside the walls of his prison, insulted, threatened, subjected to every species of moral torture, until at last the cruel skill prevailed. Broken in mind and in body, led to believe that he was deserted by Christendom, betrayed by the clergy and hierarchy, fas-

cinated too, at intervals, by the magnetic personal ascendency of Napoleon, moved more by his caresses than his threats, the Pontiff signed the fatal deed on the 25th of January 1813.

The momentary aberration was quickly repented of and disavowed, but it remains an eternal example of the danger which the Church must run when she forfeits her temporal independence, and is stripped of the protecting bulwarks of her temporal power.

Napoleon thought that he had now compassed his long-desired end, that he had henceforth nothing to fear from the decrepit old Pontiff, or the cowed priesthood whom his weakness had misled, and who were still ignorant of his prompt and vehement recantation. The conqueror of Europe beheld himself in spirit the centre of an apotheosis, wielding the sceptre over the souls as well as the bodies of all Christendom; he beheld the stern majesty of the Church of Rome prostrate at his feet, as the Greek Church was at the feet of his brother Cæsar of Russia. What a serene and glorious pageant was that which passed in fancy before the eyes of the great warrior, as he paced the green alleys of Fontainebleau, while close by, within the palace walls, Pius VII. was weeping bitter penitent tears!

The partisans of Napoleon I. are proud of claiming for him the gratitude of the Church of Christ. They say that he came and found her in the mire, a beggar and an outcast where she had once been queen, and that he stretched forth his hand and raised her up, and clothed her in scarlet and gold, and placed a crown upon her head. It is true he did all this, and then he claimed his reward. It was not much, only the immemorial bargain of which Satan first pronounced the formula in the desert outside Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago—*si cadens adoraveris me.*

God's hour came; Waterloo came, Napoleon fell, and the Church of Christ remained. No wonder she hailed with joy the return of the Bourbons to France. The restoration appeared to her like the dawn of freedom and dignity.

The Sabbath was passed into a law, bishops recovered the direction of their seminaries, religious orders were encouraged by the State; in fact, religion was patronised in high places. Many of the Ministers were sincere Catholics, and threw the weight of their influence honestly into the effort at a general reform amongst the people. To this effect missions were opened in the towns and villages, there was preaching in the market-places and in the fields; processions were seen winding through the valleys as in olden times, pilgrims journeyed to distant shrines, and filled the forest glades with the long-forgotten sound of hymns and canticles. The reign of faith was restored to France, and seemed enthroned more fervently than ever in the hearts of her people. So it seemed; but it was not so in reality.

There was no doubt a good deal of sincere individual piety in all these demonstrations, but, as regarded the general result, the movement was an utter failure. Nor can we wonder at this. The Revolution had destroyed and profaned the old temples, and done its best to crush every spark of faith out of the country, and if the work of annihilation had not been complete it was universal and tremendous. Napoleon, emerging at this period of social chaos, had judged it advisable to curb the lawless infidelity of the nation by imposing on it a State religion. The yoke had been accepted outwardly; but despotism makes few converts,—it makes hypocrites instead; and in the present instance, not being reinforced by the sanguinary orthodoxy of the Inquisition, it merely engendered corruption and a

cynical contempt of all religion. The people were not to be driven by law into keeping the commandments and obeying the precepts of the Church because the Emperor decreed they were to do so. The old edifice was sapped to its foundation, and it must take more than a nod from Cæsar to rebuild it.

When, therefore, Louis XVIII. inserted a *bona fide* clause in his charter constituting the kingdom Catholic, the kingdom laughed, laughed in defiance and derision. Whatever the faults of the French are, hypocrisy never was one of them; and to be thus officially labelled as members of a Church which they had ceased to believe in, roused all that remained of native honesty and independence in the national mind. It had taken more than a generation to make them atheists and sceptics, and it was not to be expected they would now turn Christians at the bidding of a State paper. The efforts of the Government to bring about such a result only irritated and aggravated the existing evil by provoking a spirit of direct antagonism.

For instance, it had taken years to wean the working classes from the routine observance of the Sabbath, but having finally broken with the habit, they had no mind to take it up again; they had grown used to open their shops on Sundays, and it required the constant and active intervention of the law to make them close them; even at the present day, as we all know, this reform remains a struggle in which the Fourth Commandment is but partially triumphant. The Catechism of 1793, written in the blood of their murdered king, and enforced by the guillotine, had taught the people hatred of all constituted authority, and this hatred was more specially directed to the highest expression of authority on earth. They had seen the Church thrown down, and trampled under foot by anarchy, then picked up to serve as an instrument in the hands of despot-

ism; she had lost all prestige in their eyes, and become the symbol of a despised and fallen *régime*, the wreck of a power whose day had passed to give way to the day of Voltaire. The reign of Voltaire had succeeded to the reign of Christ. So long, however, as this succession was tacitly admitted, the zeal of the worshippers was slack enough; but no sooner did a Christian Government appear, and announce its intention of reinstating the Gospel in its lost supremacy, than the smouldering zeal of the Voltaireans leaped out in a flame. Voltaire's works had not been reprinted once under the Empire, but from 1817 to 1824 no less than twelve fresh editions were called for and exhausted in France. Napoleon had given back to divine worship the churches which the Revolution had taken from it; but it was one thing to restore churches, and another to restore the faith that had worshipped there; so it was easy now to throw down Voltaire's statues, and to cast out his unhallowed dust from beneath the consecrated altar of the living God, but it was another thing to overturn his empire in hearts from which his presence had banished the reign of "the Galilean."

The restoration opened schools, and paid Christian teachers, but it could not provide docile pupils to attend them; the children of men who used up twelve editions of Voltaire in eight years were not likely to prove willing listeners to masters who cried anathema on Voltaire and his doctrines; they had imbibed a spirit which was instinctively hostile to the spirit of the Gospel; they were thirsting for other lessons.

But although undoubtedly this was the general rule, it was redeemed by exceptions. The old tree had been stricken, but there was life in its roots still, and the sap was rising through the seared branches, and putting forth young shoots here and there. Amidst the youth born of

this period, there were many who thirsted for purer and stronger waters than those poisoned ones from which their fathers had drunk; there were seeds of fiery activity in their natures, which only required to be fostered by the right guide in order to bring forth good fruit. Men cannot summon these guides to their own rescue, but God, who loves His creatures, and holds the thread of their destinies, even when they stray from Him, can and often mercifully does. He never leaves Himself without a witness on the earth, although at times it seems as though He did, as if He abandoned humanity to its own perverse and wayward folly, letting falsehood prevail and truth perish, but in His own appointed time He comes forth and produces His witness to exalt the one and confound the other.

Those who have made any serious study of the state of society in France at the period when Frederic Ozanam, in his capacity of a Christian teacher, first appeared on its scene, will hardly tax us with exaggeration if we claim for him the grave and bright responsibility of having been in his sphere one of these witnesses of God to his generation. He himself was, as we have seen, early imbued with the idea that some special mission would be confided to him, that he would at a given time be employed in the defence of truth. This dominant idea permeates his whole mind, and recurs frequently in his letters during his sojourn at M. Ampère's, and he never ceases to urge his fellow-students to aspire to the same glorious mission, and prepare themselves to accomplish it worthily.

CHAPTER IV.

1832.

FEW things in the condition of society in France during the years which followed the revolution of 1830 were more remarkable and more dispiriting than the apathy which pervaded all classes. Indeed, the sound portion of society, the party of order, as they have come to be called, have at all times displayed, in the strongest degree, this criminal weakness; whenever a crisis comes, they collapse; resignation and passive endurance become the practical epitome of their creed; they lie down and let the communists of the hour walk over them.

When Ozanam came to Paris, the department of Public Instruction still showed signs of this fatal inertia, which had deadened it under the Empire, when open hostility to religion and morals had given way to sleek oppression and an outward varnish of respect as offensive as it was paralysing.

The Restoration had inaugurated a new era, but the energy to profit by it was wanting; indifference and the *laisser-aller* spirit had become a rooted habit in men's minds, and was not to be cured in a day.

These periods of coma are the grand opportunity of false prophets and founders of new religions; then it is that they stand forth and call around them the restless spirits who, impatient at the general stagnation, chafe under the dead weight, and burn to find an outlet for their pent-up

energies. The Abbé de Lamennais was the great false prophet of this period. Partly the creation, partly the reaction of the spirit of his times, he responded fully to its cry, and took a hold upon the sympathies of his fellow-men, unparalleled perhaps in the history of similar influences.

Before this bright misleading star had risen, the St. Simonians were in the field, promising to lead humanity to the second earthly Paradise, attracting great numbers of the young by their specious and brilliant theories.

Frederic Ozanam had drawn his maiden sword against them, as we saw, and with considerable local effect; but the ranks of the St. Simonians were growing. He saw this in Paris better than he could have done at Lyons. The various classes which he attended bore evidence to the necessity for some counteracting force to stem the torrent of absurd and impious doctrines which poured out daily from these fountains where the young generation came to drink. Frederic was fond of relating an incident connected with the lectures at the Collége de France. M. Letrone, the Professor, was lecturing on the Deluge, and was at great pains to prove that the story of the universal flood was a popular fallacy; there had not been one great, but several smaller deluges, at different epochs and in different places. This theory, besides its novelty, had the immense advantage of throwing discredit on the "legend of Genesis," if it could be maintained. The audience listened with profound attention, but Ozanam could not conceal his impatience. A young man named Lallier noticed the angry glances and expressive shrugs in which he vented his feelings at every fresh absurdity propounded by the learned Professor. M. Lallier, who, for the same reason as Frederic, had kept aloof from companions of his own age in Paris, determined as soon as the lecture was over, to go and make acquaintance with him. Ozanam,

however, left before the end of it, and the opportunity was lost. Several weeks elapsed before they met again; it was at a lecture of the Abbé Gerbet's. On issuing from the room, Frederic was at once surrounded by a group of students, who were discussing with great animation the ideas set forth by the lecturer; M. Lallier went up and spoke to him, and it was not long before the chance acquaintance ripened to a friendship which lasted without a cloud until Ozanam's death.

The number of Catholic young men was thus augmenting in the various classes, or it might be more accurate to say they were finding each other out, and, gathering courage from union, were holding up their heads more boldly. Fear of public opinion, that plague of religion and morality in France, had held many back from avowing themselves Catholics, because they fancied they were alone. One young student, who had often seen Ozanam at the École de Droit, and been attracted by his quiet diligence and the kindly charm of his manner, but had never ventured to seek his acquaintance, met him one day coming out of St. Etienne du Mont. "What!" he exclaimed; "are you a Catholic? How glad I am! let us be friends; I thought you were an atheist!"

The following incident is also significant. These two young students, in company with a third, went one day to attend a sermon in one of the largest churches in Paris. They arrived late, and found every seat taken. Ozanam and his friend at last secured places, but their companion, after elbowing his way up to the pulpit, could only find standing-room, and there he remained. He was six feet high, and otherwise of a striking appearance, so that the curé, who was seated with his clergy in the *banc-d'œuvre* opposite, noticed him, and, taking for granted that he was standing there out of disrespect, rose and publicly rebuked

him, adding, "Your attitude shows that you are more accustomed to frequent the theatre than the church." The young man blushed deeply, but held his ground until the sermon was over, when he went to the sacristy and had an explanation with the curé. The latter, as may be imagined, was greatly distressed at his mistake, but, after making an ample apology, remarked, "We so seldom see a young man in our churches, except it be, as I said, from a bad motive,—to mock or criticise,—that it never occurred to me you were an exception to the rule." The exceptions however were increasing notably. Frederic had been little more than a year in Paris when he writes to Ernest Falconnet :—

"We are more numerous than we thought. I have met here with young men strong in intellectual vigour, and rich in generous sentiments, who devote their thoughts and researches to the high mission which is also yours and mine. Every time a rationalist Professor raises his voice against Revelation, Catholic voices are lifted up to answer him. We have, several of us, banded together for this purpose. Twice already I have taken my share of this noble work by addressing my objections in writing to these gentlemen. We have had our chief success at X.'s class. Twice he attacked the Church, first by treating the Papacy as a temporary institution, born under Charlemagne, and now dying out, and the next time in accusing the clergy of having at all times favoured despotism. Our answers were publicly read, and produced the best effect, both on the Professor, who as good as retracted his words, and on the audience, who applauded. The most useful result of all this is that it enables us to show the students of the present day that *one may be a Catholic and have common sense, that one may love liberty and religion at the same time;* also it stirs them up from their fatal religious

indifference, and accustoms them to grave and earnest discussion.

"But the most interesting and consoling thing of all for us young Christians are the 'Conferences' which have been undertaken, at our request, by the Abbé Gerbet. Now we may say with truth that light shines in the darkness,—*Lux in tenebris lucet.* Every fortnight we have a lecture on philosophy and history; nowhere does language more penetrating, or doctrine more profound, resound in our ears.

"The system of Lamennais, as expounded by him, is no longer that of his provincial partisans; it is the immortal alliance of faith and science, of charity and industry, of power and liberty."

A more serious passage of arms occurred between the two parties a few weeks later.

TO HIS COUSIN FALCONNET.

"The chair of Philosophy at the Sorbonne was the battle-field. Professor Jouffroy, one of the most illustrious rationalists of our day, thought fit to attack Revelation, the very possibility of Revelation. A young man, a Catholic, addressed some remarks to him in writing, to which the philosopher promised to reply. He waited fifteen days, to get ready his weapons no doubt, and then, without reading the letter, he just made a sort of analysis of it, and tried to refute it after his own fashion. The Catholic student, seeing that he was misunderstood, sent a second letter to the Professor, who this time took no notice of it, but continued his attacks, protesting that Catholicism repudiated both science and liberty. Thereupon we all met and drew up a protest which embodied our real sentiments; it was signed hastily by fifteen students, and addressed to M. Jouffroy. This he could not avoid

reading. The audience, composed of over 200 persons, listened with respect to our profession of faith. The philosopher hummed and hawed, confounded himself in apologies, declared that he never meant to attack Christianity in particular, which he held, on the contrary, in the highest veneration, and promised to endeavour for the future not to wound the belief of any of his Catholic hearers. But above all, he mentioned a fact which is most significant, and most encouraging for our times:—'Gentlemen,' he said, 'five years ago all the objections sent in to me were dictated by materialism; spiritualistic doctrines met with the fiercest resistance; to-day this feeling is greatly altered: the opposition has become quite Catholic.' It is sad to see him struggling to solve the problem of human destinies by the mere force of reason; the most absurd inconsistencies and contradictory admissions escape him every day. Lately he declared it was false that the righteous were ever unhappy, or that the wicked were ever spared in this world. Yesterday he confessed that the cravings of the intellect are insatiable, that science, far from satisfying them, only serves to discover their boundlessness, and leads man to despair by showing him the impossibility of ever reaching perfection.

"He admitted that material knowledge did not suffice to our minds, and that after exhausting it the void remained, and he himself felt impelled to seek for supernatural light. My dear friend, one must pity them, these poor philosophers of rationalism! If you could but hear their extravagant propositions and their stupid attacks on Christianity, mere servile declamations from Voltaire, always on the same key; if you could hear one of them, for instance, trying to explain away miracles by asserting that, the laws of nature being beyond our reach, we cannot appreciate their derogations, and that the resurrection of a dead man would

present nothing miraculous to a *savan* of our day!—if you could but hear all this, would you not congratulate Christianity on having such adversaries?

"Let us cheer up; our enemies are weak; these fine doctors of incredulity could be worsted by the simplest of our village priests: let us cheer up, I say, for the work of God is advancing, and will be accomplished by the youth of this very day; who knows? perhaps even by you and me!"

The zeal and ability which the growing group of young Catholics displayed in the service of truth certainly justified this sanguine expectation. Frederic was as yet far from realising that he was himself the mainspring of the movement, yet such was already the case. From this time forward a notable change was observed in the tone of the Professors of the Sorbonne; their teaching continued as radically anti-Christian as before, but they were more guarded in their language, more considerate for the feelings of the Christian portion of their audience. This change was attributed by every one to young Ozanam's influence. He modestly speaks of the able letter which had been written to M. Jouffroy as "a protest which we drew up," but it was in reality entirely his work, and displayed an amount of scientific and historical knowledge which showed the infidel philosopher that Christianity would defend herself with those very weapons which he and his school fancied were their own exclusive possession.

CHAPTER V.

1833.

FREDERIC'S residence with M. Ampère was an advantage to him in many ways. The patriarch of mathematicians, as he was styled, soon conceived a fatherly affection for his young guest, and yielded to his virtues and talents that generous tribute of admiration which true greatness so readily pays to both. He liked nothing better than to call Frederic into his study, and converse with him by the hour on philosophy and science; he frequently solicited his assistance at his work, and long treatises on scientific subjects are still preserved written half by one and half by the other. Even after Frederic had left him, on the return of his son from Germany, and gone to live in chambers, M. Ampère constantly sent to beg his help in some urgent and difficult work. Once, when he had only a few days to remain in Paris for the completion of a plan for the classification of sciences, to which he attached great importance, he writes to the hard-worked student—"Come, I entreat you, for the sake of all the friendship you bear me; there is not a moment to lose, if you will not deprive me of a thing to which I attach immense interest." M. Ampère used to say that if Ozanam had devoted himself exclusively to science he would have been the first mathematician of his age. There can be no doubt but that his literary power was greatly strengthened by the scientific knowledge which he acquired, almost by contagion, from

M. Ampère. He had always a great horror of becoming simply a man of letters, and nothing else; a man whose mind only worked in one way and on one subject like a machine. While still a mere boy he felt that true instinct of genius which rebels against a groove, and longs for space. He began very early to plough up his mind in every direction, and sow a variety of seeds in order that he might reap many and various crops. Science proved a valuable helpmate to him; he owed to it, probably, in a great measure his sheer inability to treat any subject superficially. He loved it, too, for its own sake, because it opened out to him resources in every part of nature, revealing secrets which literature cannot discover, but only describe; because it furnished him with contrasts and comparisons of endless variety and beauty, and was unconsciously educating him to be deep, philosophical, and harmonious as a writer. Sometimes in these intimate conversations, the sense of the mysteries and beauties of nature which M. Ampère's own remarks or researches suggested would throw the Christian *savan* into a sudden ecstasy of admiration and reverent self-abasement. Many a time he would break off abruptly in what he was explaining or investigating, and burying his great white head in his hands cry out like one overpowered by some high presence, "Oh how great God is, Ozanam! how great God is!"

The example of the old man's strong and simple faith was a constant lesson, and sometimes a great support to Frederic. His own faith was sound and fervent, but it was not proof against those intervals of *découragement*[1] and occasional sinkings of the heart which are consistent with the firmest intellectual belief. He was all his life a

[1] The word has no exact equivalent in English. "Low spirits" will not do, as a man may be in high spirits and yet *très découragé*.

sufferer from both, and now, overdriven as he was by work, weary sometimes of the sustained effort which seemed to bring such little result, while all around him egotism and infidelity were prosperous and rampant, he was occasionally assailed by a feeling of bitterness, almost of resentment, against the faith which ruled his soul, but which was slow to repay the constant sacrifice it demanded. One day, while a prey to this feeling, he went out, and, walking in the direction of St. Etienne du Mont, turned in, more from routine, or some unconscious impulse, than from any deliberate prompting of piety; he advanced mechanically towards a favourite shrine, where, as usual, a group of humble worshippers, women and children for the most part, were collected, and there kneeling in the midst of them, in an attitude of rapt devotion, he beheld M. Ampère. The sight, the lesson it conveyed, went straight to the young man's heart; he burst into tears, and falling on his knees, repented of having harboured, even in passing, a disloyal thought toward that faith before whose sublimest mystery his great and venerable master knelt in lowly and joyous adoration.

This tendency to *découragement*, which remained all his life a source of keen suffering to Frederic, doubtless in some degree resulted from physical conditions, from a health naturally delicate, and which, from his earliest years, he had pitilessly overtaxed; but it may be still more regarded as part of the price which most men pay for high mental and spiritual gifts. As life went on, *découragement* became in him a kind of self-weariness, a profound recoil from self, the natural result of that ceaseless inward strife which, with the help of grace, he was carrying on, and also of his finely disciplined nature. The sense of failure in the life-long unsurrendering battle did not disturb the harmony of his mind; the sadness it engendered was of that noble

kind which, in pure and compassionate souls, grows out of the experience of life, and pours itself out in pity; it never turned sour, like that of a disappointed man who vents his bitterness in hatred and sterile denunciations, and too often lapses from sheer despair of mankind into unworthy self-betrayal. Ozanam's fault was, on the contrary, to believe too much in his fellow-creatures, to attribute virtue and goodness to them instinctively, and to lay the responsibility of their follies and crimes too exclusively at the door of that abstract criminal called Society. He reserved his severest denunciations for himself, and he is unsparing enough of them. Alluding to this very subject of *découragement*, he gives the following explanation of it:—"There are two sorts of pride; one is satisfied with self: this is the commonest and the least bad. The other is discontented, because it expects great things from self, and is disappointed. This latter kind, the most refined and by far the most dangerous, is mine." Great minds are commonly humble ones; for humility is, after all, but a clear, comprehensive view of the gulf that divides self, as we are supposed to see it—as the Christian, or even the philosopher, sees it—from the ideal self that we are aiming it. The grandest minds are apt to realise this best, as the finest natures are sure to suffer most from the sense of failure, in virtue of their finer sympathies and higher aspirations.

At an age when the steadiest boys are thinking chiefly of their amusements, Frederic Ozanam was brooding over the miseries and wants of his time, suffering from them as those do who love the sufferers too well to take refuge in indifference or callous despair. "We must do something, but what can we do?" was his constant cry; and this anxiety as to his vocation preyed upon him, and was made a matter of ardent prayer. A career was not in his eyes a mere means of livelihood or honourable labour. He

realised, as few men do at the outset of life, that every Christian has his work appointed in the scheme of Divine Providence, and that though we are free to reject the ordinance, we are not free to escape the consequences of our rejection. He still maintained the same indifference as to the exact nature and sphere of his work. It was immaterial to him whether it cast him in what the world calls a brilliant position, or left him hidden in some obscure corner. His one anxiety was to be where God wished him to be. This conscious purity of intention and sincere conformity to the Divine will did not, however, prevent him from feeling that natural anxiety concerning the future which his circumstances suggested; but he strove with all his might against it. "How often have I wished beforehand to build the edifice of my own life," he says to Falconnet, "gathering up in fancy all that seemed to me best calculated to make it beautiful and grand from my childish school-days, when I dreamt in Latin verses, until now, when I dream of so many other things. You remember those endless conversations in our walks together, when we used to talk over the things we were to accomplish some day.

"Poor mortals that we are, we cannot tell whether we shall ever see to-morrow, and we want to settle what we will do in twenty years hence! We know not what we are capable of doing, or what is for our happiness, and we want to trace out a road for the development of faculties whose very existence we are not sure of, in order to attain to a happiness which is a mystery to us. Besides, think of this: of what use is it to know beforehand what we are to do, except in order to do it well? What is the use of knowing our destination unless it be to accomplish it? What good is it to see our way except to walk? Provided, then, that the traveller sees ten steps before him, will he not arrive as surely as if he saw to the end of the road? Pro-

vided that the workman knows every hour of the day the task he has to perform the next hour, will he not arrive as well at the end of his work as if he had the complete plan of the architect before his eyes? And does it not suffice for us to know our duty and our destiny for the nearest point of the future, without seeking to peer beyond it into the infinite? Is it not enough for us to know what God appoints for us to-morrow, without troubling ourselves about what He may command us to do ten years hence, since between this and then He may call us to our rest? I don't mean by this that we should be careless or lazy in following a vocation clearly pointed out, but I mean that we ought to content ourselves with knowing a portion of it, and pursue that calmly and bravely, and not worry ourselves about the rest that is hidden from us. The uncertainty of human things should not unnerve our courage or damp our activity; on the contrary, it should attach us more firmly to our duty in the present, because of our ignorance of the future. We should find great peace if we could imbue ourselves with this thought, that we are here solely to accomplish the will of God; that that will is accomplished from day to day; and that he who dies leaving his task unfinished, is just as far advanced in the eyes of supreme justice as he who has leisure to accomplish it fully; that man can no more create his moral being than his physical; that we cannot make ourselves artists, poets, orators, men of genius, but that we become such little by little, and insensibly, by God's leading. The greatest men are those who never planned their own destinies beforehand, but let themselves be taken by the hand and led."

The holidays of this year, 1833, were spent in a journey to Italy. Mme. Ozanam accompanied her husband and sons as far as Florence, and there they parted, she remaining with a married sister, while the others went on

to Rome, Naples, Milan, Loreto, etc. Frederic had from his childhood shown a keen sense of the beauties of nature, yet, strange to say, this feeling, which was developed in so high a degree later, does not seem to have been strongly called out by this enchanting tour; his letters during the course of it show little trace of enthusiasm in this respect, while every page bears witness to his delight in the beauties of art which meet him at every step; he is in raptures with the poetry of the land of Tasso and Petrarch, but the feeling which transcends all others is his sympathy with the philosophical idea everywhere embodied in art and nature; this penetrates and absorbs him to the exclusion, comparatively speaking, of all other studies and contemplations. Dante is the ideal impersonation of this philosophy, and Ozanam falls a prey to the spell which the semi-divine poet has for centuries cast upon so many lofty and impassioned souls. Recalling the precise spot where this spell was first cast upon him, he writes, many years afterwards, "When, after accomplishing a pilgrimage long dreamed of, you visit Rome for the first time, and, with a thrill of reverent curiosity ascend the grand staircase of the Vatican, and behold the wonders of every age and country united in the hospitality of that magnificent abode, you come at last to a spot which may be called the sanctuary of Christian art,—the chambers of Raphael."

Here, in presence of that immortal masterpiece, the Dispute on the Blessed Sacrament, he is seized with enthusiastic admiration; but what strikes him first, what impresses him above everything else, is the laurel-crowned figure of Dante. How came the Florentine poet to stand thus amidst the most venerable and accredited defenders of the Divine mystery? This question takes hold of Ozanam, and leaves him no peace until he has worked out its solution, as we shall see.

CHAPTER VI.

1833.

THE requirements of the young Catholic party grew with their numbers, and they soon began to feel the want of a meeting-place where they could coalesce and discuss their plan of action. This primary want was unexpectedly supplied by M. Bailly. M. Bailly, or the Père Bailly, as the affectionate familiarity of his young friends had nicknamed him, was a worthy old gentleman, the proprietor of a printing establishment and a newspaper, who received into his house a certain number of young men studying for their *droit*. His newspaper, the *Tribune Catholique*, was a remarkable institution; it had no subscribers to speak of, but appeared regularly three times a week, and was sent gratis to everybody who would read it. It had been founded in 1828, under the name of the *Correspondant*, and soon became the recognised organ of Catholicism, and continued so until 1830, when M. de Lamennais came to Paris and founded the *Avenir*, which killed it. M. Bailly, foreseeing this result, had advised M. de Lamennais to take up the *Correspondant* and graft his new journal upon it, instead of founding an original one; but M. de Lamennais declined the offer. He started the *Avenir*, and almost immediately the *Correspondant* died. M. Bailly soon saw, however, that the success of the brilliant new journal represented a danger more to be deplored than the fall of his own paper, and that it was absolutely necessary to

oppose a breakwater of some sort to the extreme doctrines which were pouring out from the *Avenir*, with the bewildering force and beauty of a mountain-torrent let loose. Accordingly, in 1831, he started the *Tribune Catholique*, which, like its predecessor, appeared every second day, and went gratis to everybody who would read it. M. Bailly composed the whole of it himself; politics, literature, news, reviews, all issued from his indefatigable pen, supplemented occasionally by an article from one of his pupils, who were proud to contribute in the measure of their ability to the heroic newspaper.

The desire to give these young men an occupation which would be exciting, and at the same time useful,—which would keep them at home of an evening, and furnish them with interesting and wholesome subjects of discussion,—had had its share in Père Bailly's motives for founding the *Tribune Catholique*. While, however, rendering full justice to his disinterestedness, and that keen sympathy with the young, with their aspirations, efforts, and special temptations, which made them delight in his society, we must not lose sight of the fact that M. Bailly was the proprietor of a printing-press, and that his enterprise, if it brought him dubious profits, involved but little or no pecuniary risk. He and the *Tribune Catholique* lived at No. 7 Rue du Petit Bourbon St. Sulpice, and here it was, in the spacious office of the newspaper, that he proposed Ozanam and his friends should assemble once a week, and after hearing a lecture from him on history and rhetoric, the improvised class-room should be turned into a debating-hall, and the students should hold forth amongst themselves.

M. Bailly's first idea had been to admit none but Catholics as members, but he soon saw that this would not do. In the first place, the Catholics were too few and too

scattered, and in the next place, if the members were all of one mind, the debates would die of inanition; it was absolutely necessary to feed them by introducing an element of contradiction. So the barrier receded, and the circle soon extended indefinitely. Voltairians and Fourierists, Rationalists and St. Simonians, Greeks, Parthians, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, flocked in, and the debates became proportionally lively and interesting. After a while, they became so popular that the offices of the *Tribune Catholique* could hold the crowd no longer. Père Bailly again came to the rescue by transferring the field of battle from his own premises to a spacious hall in the Place de l'Estrapade, which had formerly belonged to the Bonnes Études, a society founded in 1811 for literary and scientific studies, and whose members contracted a special obligation to help each other to get on in the world. This society had been suppressed by the Revolution. M. Bailly continued to give his weekly lectures gratis as heretofore, and besides this, paid the rent of the place and all the expenses connected with it; he was a poor man, but whenever there was a service to be rendered to the cause of truth, or to the young, he contrived somehow to find the necessary means.

The scope and power of the young debaters seemed to widen with their enlarged space. The polemics on both sides, the Christian and the anti-Christian, became so earnest that the combatants had to devote all the time they could steal from their regular studies to preparing answers and attacks. The popularity of the St. Simonians, which had been at its culminating point only a little while before, had suddenly wavered, and was now on the decline; but they had still great influence, and some of their leaders were amongst the most prominent of the debaters. They were, moreover, generally the aggressors, and this

gave them the advantage of arriving in the field with their speeches prepared; whereas the attacked party had to answer impromptu, and thus, from not being ready with chapter and verse to prove the fallacy of an argument or the error of a statement, were sometimes apparently worsted in the fight. Ozanam, as the recognised leader of the Christian party, took a foremost part in the debates, and displayed here, for the first time in public, that impassioned and sympathetic eloquence which was later to win him such brilliant triumphs at the Sorbonne. There was also a sort of legal club, where the students played at judge and counsel, which seems to have been very amusing, as well as instructive. Frederic was one day called upon, at an hour's notice, to supply the place of attorney-general in a heavy and complicated case; and though he acquitted himself to the signal approval of the court, he was apparently less satisfied with the result himself. "I felt nervous and weak," he says to Falconnet, "because I was not sufficiently master of my subject;" and then, going on to speak of the other debates, he says, "But the historical debates are quite another thing; we meet every Saturday, and there it is an open field,—history, philosophy, literature, everything has free play. The doors are open to all opinions, and this results in the liveliest emulation. Then every composition, after it has been read, is handed over to a committee, which criticises it, dissects it, and names a reporter, who is to be its organ before the meeting; nothing escapes the severity of this censorship: it goes into the most minute details, and exercises a control that is sometimes exceedingly amusing. Lastly, a superior committee is established to give one general impulse to the whole conference, to point out means of advancement, to draw up the general reports, and testify to the results of the common work. There have been

some most interesting dissertations, and some charming pieces of poetry; six or seven compositions are read at each sitting."

Frederic had a sincere love of poetry, which he always considered a vital element in intellectual, almost in moral culture.

"We want something that will take hold of us and transport us," he says, "something that will at once possess and elevate our thoughts. We have need of poetry in the midst of the cold, prosaic world where we live, and, at the same time, of philosophy, which will give a reality to our ideal conceptions. This twofold benefit we find in Catholicism, to which, for our greater happiness, we are bound. Here then is the starting-point of all our intellectual labours, as well as the cream of our imagination; here is the central point to which they should all converge."

This ever-recurring burden of his song, love of the faith, and steady, persevering efforts in its service, begins henceforth to shape itself into a more definite purpose.

"You know," he says, "what the great object of my desires was before leaving Lyons. *You know that I yearned to form a reunion of friends working together at the edifice of science, under the flag of Catholic ideas.* This desire remained sterile for a long time, until at last a friend opened to me the door of a small literary assembly, the last plank of what was once the Société des Bonnes Études, and where the want of scientific thought and study almost precluded philosophy and serious research. We assembled in a small room; fifteen students, at most, were faithful to the rendezvous, and the great questions of the past and future were scarcely touched upon. Thanks, however, to the zeal of a few, the little society

has increased in a wonderful manner; it numbers to-day sixty members, many of whom bear names not unknown to fame; a numerous audience is present at our meetings, and the large hall is filled to overflowing. We were obliged to make certain severe conditions for the admission of candidates, but nevertheless they continue to multiply, and we recruit daily young men of superior ability. Some of them are precocious travellers, who have visited various parts of Europe; one even has been round the world; some have gone deeply into the theories of art; others have sounded the problems of political economy; the greater number are devoted to the study of history, and a few to philosophy. We have even two or three of those chosen spirits to whom God has given wings, and who will one day be poets, if death or the storms of life do not break them on the way. The noisy domain of politics is closed to our discussions, but in every other respect we have entire liberty. From day to day grave questions are mooted; young philosophers come forward, and summon Catholicism to render an account of its doctrines and its works, and then, seizing the inspiration of the moment, one of us stands up and meets the attack, explains the Christian idea which is misunderstood, appeals to history for proofs of its application, and not unfrequently, warmed on to eloquence by the grandeur of the subject, establishes, on a solid basis, the immortal union of true philosophy with faith. Needless to say, it is not theological propositions which are thus dealt with, but merely the scientific and social bearing of the gospel. The lists are open, and opinions of every shade may ascend the tribune. As, however, the Christians are equal in numbers to their adversaries, and as, on the other hand, they are animated by more order, zeal, and assiduity, it is nearly always in their favour that the victory is decided. I must

add, that the frankest cordiality reigns amongst us, a sort of real fraternity; with the others we are on terms of courtesy and good-will. There are about ten of us Catholics united in a closer union of heart and mind, a sort of literary knighthood, all devoted friends, without any secrets from one another, but who share all, heart to heart, in common joys, hopes, and sorrows.

"Sometimes, when the air is balmy and the night-breeze soft, and the moonbeams are lighting up the majestic dome of the Pantheon, that grand edifice which seems about to lift itself to the skies, and whose summit has been robbed of the cross, as if to break the impetus of its upward flight,—sometimes, I say, the sergent-de-ville stops on his beat to cast an unquiet eye on six or seven young men, who, arm-in-arm, promenade for hours together in the silent, deserted square. Their countenance is serene, their gait measured, their conversation full of enthusiasm, of sensibility and gladness. They discourse concerning many things on earth and in Heaven; they speak of God, of their fathers, of friends whom they have left at the old fireside; they speak of their country, and of humanity. The stupid Parisian who elbows them as he hurries on to his pleasures does not understand their language; it is a dead language which few here understand. I, who was with them, understood it, and, as I listened to them, I seemed to feel my heart expand; I felt myself a man, and, weak and cowardly as I am, I drew from my contact with them some moments of energy for the morrow's work. Another source of life to us are the soirées of the young and gifted Count de Montalembert; there the most illustrious champions of Catholicism open to us the rich stores of their conversation. Some are to be seen there who have fought with the sword, and sealed their convictions with their blood; there are young Polish and Belgian officers, and distin-

guished diplomatists; then there are men of another school, „who come like pilgrims from another empire to contemplate for a moment the spirit of union and gentleness which reigns amongst their adversaries; there in turns you meet MM. Ballanche and Sainte-Beuve, Savigny the younger and Beauffort, Ampère fils and Alfred de Vigny, de Méro and d'Ecstein. Last Sunday Lherminier was there. I even chatted a moment with him; then a most interesting conversation was started between him and M. de Montalembert; we stayed till midnight listening to them. Victor Considérant was there also; a great deal was said about the misery of the people just now; it is considered a very sad omen for the future. But we talk politics very little, and science, on the other hand, a great deal. M. de Montalembert does the honours with wonderful grace. He talks very well, and is remarkably well-informed."

CHAPTER VII.

1833.

But while the Catholics were thus drawing together, their adversaries were not idle. The chairs of all the faculties in Paris resounded daily to impious and insidious attacks on the doctrines of Christianity. Not satisfied with this, the learned Professors had recourse to calumny, history and experience having taught them that it generally proves a more successful weapon against truth than logic. Every lecture was full of false quotations and historical inaccuracies, perfidiously prepared with a view to mislead their hearers as to the fundamental teaching and spirit of the Gospel. Ozanam was a daily witness of this disloyal warfare, and it fired him with indignation. His able retort to Professor Jouffroy[1] had had the effect of silencing direct attack from that brilliant psychologist by winning his personal respect for the juvenile champion of the cause. But the hostility continued unabated from every other quarter. Frederic meantime was pursued by the idea that deeds, not speech, should be opposed to the enemy. "It is all very well talking and arguing and holding one's own against them, but why can we not *do something?*" he constantly repeated. Perhaps the necessity for "doing something" was in a certain degree prompted

1 Jouffroy, on his deathbed, ten years later, returned to the faith which he had spent the greater part of his life in attacking. His dying words to a philosopher friend, who stood beside him, were, "All the systems put together are not worth one page of the Catechism!"

or pressed upon him by the St. Simonians, who in answer to their defence of the gospel, continually taunted him and his party with, "Show us your works!" They admitted the past grandeur of Christianity, but persisted in declaring that it was now a dead tree that bore no fruit.

Even the historical debates of the Place de l'Estrapade, which every week were the occasion of some brilliant display of Frederic's talent, were becoming distasteful to him, because their character was merely literary and rhetorical; they were not a direct effort in the interests of truth; they were useful and delightful, but quite inadequate to the service of truth as he understood it.

One day, after taking part in a more than usually fiery debate on some historical question, he left the conference-hall in company with two friends, M. Lallier and M. Lamache; they walked on to the Hôtel Corneille, where the latter resided, discussing as they went what could be done to stir up the Catholic camp to more strenuous efforts, and to the necessity of utilising these weekly meetings for some higher purpose. They went up to Lallier's rooms and held a long consultation as to what could be done. It was suggested that the leaders should contrive to meet at the house of one or other of them every week, so as to discuss more exhaustively the points it was essential to bring out against their adversaries, that they might thus arrive at the meeting armed efficiently, and prepared all along the line; by this means also they would gradually bring back and maintain the debates within the special sphere they desired. Ozanam mentioned casually in the course of the conversation that, in discussing the matter with a friend the day before, it had occurred to them it might be possible to organise a meeting where they would occupy themselves not with discussions but with good works, and thus oppose a practical denial to the reproach

of the St. Simonians. The suggestion met with no immediate response from his two companions, but it had in reality dropped unawares the seed of the future Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Nothing particular was decided that day, but the trio parted with the understanding that they were to convene the heads of their party at an early date for the purpose of arranging some preparatory discussions for the historical debates.

In the interval, none of them could say why or how this notion of an exclusively practical meeting, which had been incidentally thrown out by Ozanam, grew in their minds, while, on the other hand, the importance of the proposed preparation for the debates insensibly diminished. They communicated the coincidence to each other, and then of one accord went off to consult Père Bailly. He saw at a glance the value of the idea, and once more placed the office of the *Tribune Catholique* at their disposal.

Here, in the month of May 1833, they held their first meeting. They begged M. Bailly to take the chair, which the dear old man of course did, together with the title of President. He had as yet only eight members to preside over; the scheme seemed quite utopian to the rest of the party, who stood aloof and contented themselves with wishing success to their more sanguine and energetic companions.

It was settled at the very first meeting that their work should be the service of God in the persons of the poor, whom they were to visit at their own dwellings and assist by every means in their power.

"If you intend the work to be really efficacious," said M. Bailly, "if you are in earnest about serving the poor as well as yourselves, you must not let it be a mere doling out of alms, bringing each your pittance of money or food; you must make it a medium of moral assistance, you must

give them the alms of good advice" (*l'aumône de la direction*).

A portion of the very greatest misery of the poor often proceeds from their not knowing how to help themselves out of a difficulty once they have got into it; they fall into distress through accidental circumstances, arising from their own fault or other people's, and they are too ignorant to see their way out of it. The law frequently has a remedy ready for them, but they don't know this, and there is no one to tell them. Their one idea when they fall into distress is to hold out their hand for an alms, a system which generally proves as ineffectual as it is demoralising. M. Bailly suggested to his young friends that they should try to remedy this lamentable state of things by placing their education, their intelligence, their special knowledge of law or science, and their general knowledge of life, at the disposal of the poor; that instead of only taking them some little material relief, they should strive to win their confidence, learn all about their affairs, and then see how they could best help them to help themselves. "Most of you are studying to be lawyers," he said, "some to be doctors, etc.: go and help the poor, each in your special line, let your studies be of use to others as well as to yourselves; it is a good and easy way of commencing your apostolate as Christians in the world."

Ozanam was sitting at M. Bailly's right hand, and one of those present recalls vividly the expression of his countenance as, with his black eyes alight, and his irregular expressive features quivering with sympathy, he listened to the President's words, and then burst out into joyous assent. The idea of this *aumône de la direction* was all the more welcome from the fact that the young men had very little else to give. They were somewhat perplexed at first from not knowing any poor people to visit. This diffi-

culty was, however, easily compassed: M. Bailly advised them to go off to that beautiful, grand soul, Sœur Rosalie, and ask her to help them. She received the young apostles of charity like the mother that she was, was overjoyed at their idea of the moral help they proposed, gave them much valuable advice as to the way of dealing with her beloved poor, and a list of needy and deserving families to visit. The Society was of course too poor to have *bons*[1] in its own name, so Sœur Rosalie sold them some of hers. The members placed themselves under the protection of St. Vincent de Paul, whose name they adopted, and this done they were fairly afloat. Each member had a poor family to look after; they met every week to report their experiences, discuss the wants of their *protégés*, and the means of relieving them; the meeting began and ended with a prayer, and a collection was made to pay for the *bons*. The proceeds of the collection were, as may be imagined, exceedingly small; but by and by the members were mystified by finding four five-franc pieces amongst the *sous* and rare little silver coins that were dropped into the leather bag. Who was the Crœsus in disguise who contributed this magnificent sum? M. Bailly, after enjoying their curiosity for a while, disclosed the secret. He was in the habit of asking Ozanam and one or two of the others to review books for the *Tribune Catholique*, and as they naturally scouted the idea of being paid anything by that most disinterested of journals, the editor took this way of remunerating them according to his slender means, knowing they could not reject it.

The rules of the Society were simple but stringent. It was forbidden to discuss politics or personal concerns at the meetings; these topics were not even to be mentioned indirectly; the Society was never to be made use of

[1] Tickets for provisions, coal, etc.

as a stepping-stone to worldly advancement. This clause, which was emphatically expressed, seemed rather superfluous, considering how remote the chances were of the members being in a position to violate it; but it was inserted as a counterpart to the Bonnes Études on which the historical conferences were in a certain sense grafted, and whose members were pledged to help each other on in the world. Nothing of the sort was to be tolerated in the new confraternity; no selfish principle was to inspire its action; it was to be animated only by charity, by love of God and of suffering humanity, without any kind of reference to self. The same spirit was to preside at the weekly conferences; there was to be no display of eloquence or learning, nothing but the reports of the week summed up in a business-like manner, and the interests of the poor discussed in brief and simple language.

The service of the members embraced the sick and infirm, and those who were out of work from some just cause, either illness, or external conditions not of their own making; every precaution was taken against the help of the Society being diverted into unworthy channels, and serving as an encouragement to idleness and pauperism.

Ozanam's first personal experience was a striking illustration of the wisdom of M. Bailly's advice as to the way they should practise charity. There fell to his lot a poor *ménage*, composed of a hard-working mother with five children, and a drunken husband, who beat them all round, though, as the wife conscientiously explained, "not every day, only from time to time." But what he never failed to do, was to drag every penny of the poor creature's earnings from her and spend it at the tavern, while she and the five children starved at home. She was in the last stage of misery and despair when Ozanam found her out. He quickly discovered that the supposed marriage

was no marriage at all, and that mother and children were free to leave their brutal master if they chose. Her astonishment on hearing this was only equalled by her thankfulness; at first she could not believe it; in her complete ignorance of law and morals, she saw no reason why it should be so. Ozanam had to go to the *Procureur du Roi* (Attorney-General) and bring her a written opinion stating the fact in legal form before her incredulity was overcome. She then gladly accepted her protector's offer to remove with her half-starved family to another room out of the house of their tormentor. The fury of the latter was very great on discovering that his means of living and drinking were thus suddenly taken from him, and he threatened all sorts of violence. Ozanam got an order from the police for him to quit Paris, but the woman hearing of this, entreated that he might be rather forbidden to leave it, and that she and the two youngest children might be sent on to Brittany, where her mother lived, and would gladly receive them. This was accordingly done. Ozanam made a collection, which in a few days produced the necessary money for the journey, and they set off as happy as birds set free. The two eldest boys, little fellows of eleven and twelve, were employed in M. Bailly's printing-office, and taken care of at his house. This was the beginning of those *patronages* which are now established in every parish in Paris, and almost in France.

At first the eight members thought to limit the confraternity to themselves, fearing that the simplicity of its design might suffer if new-comers were admitted, and that the humble little society might grow into a bustling, official organisation. M. Bailly, however, was of a different opinion, and declared that the work must expand and grow; accordingly, on certain stringent conditions, a few new members were admitted. One of them, for a time, re-

peated the trick of the President, dropping splendid alms, in the shape of five-franc pieces, into the bag. He was found out and commended for his modesty, as well as for his self-denial in conforming to the rule, which forbade a member, however rich, to give any alms to the family he visited, except what was supplied from the general fund. Such were the small beginnings of the great brotherhood of St. Vincent de Paul. Twenty years afterwards,[1] Ozanam, inaugurating a new Conference at Florence, thus relates its early history and unexpected progress :—

"We were just then invaded by a deluge of heterodox and philosophical doctrines that were clashing all round us, and we felt the need of strengthening our faith in the midst of the assaults made upon it by the various systems of false science. Some of our fellow-students were Materialists, others Simonians, others Fourierists, others Deists. When we Catholics sought to call the attention of these wandering brothers to the marvels of Christianity, they said to us,—'Yes, you have a right to speak of the past. In bygone days Christianity did indeed work wonders, but to-day Christianity is dead. And you, who boast of being Catholics, what do you do? What works can you show which prove your faith, and can claim to make us respect and acknowledge it?' And they were right; the reproach was but too well merited. Then it was that we said to one another, 'Let us to the front! Let our deeds be in accordance with our faith.' But what were we to do? What could we do to prove ourselves true Catholics except that which pleases God most? Succour our neighbour, as Jesus Christ did, and place our faith under the safeguard of charity.

"Eight of us united in this idea, and at first, as if jealous of our new-found treasure, we would not open the door of

[1] 1853.

our little assembly to any one else. But God had other views with respect to us. The association of a few intimate friends became, in His designs, the nucleus of an immense family of brothers that was to spread over a great part of Europe. You see that we cannot with truth take the title of founders, for it was God who willed and who founded our society.

"I remember that in the beginning, one of my own friends, for a moment misled by the theories of the St. Simonians, said to me with a sort of pity, 'But what do you hope to do? You are only eight poor young fellows, and you expect to relieve the misery that swarms in a city like Paris! Why, if you counted any number of members you could do but comparatively nothing! We, on the contrary, are elaborating ideas and a new system which will reform the world and banish misery from it altogether! We shall do for humanity in a moment what you could not accomplish in several centuries.'"

Nearly a quarter of a century had gone by when Ozanam related this; the St. Simonians had died away, and with them the transcendental theories which were to transfigure the world, while the "eight poor fellows" whom they despised as lunatics had increased to two thousand in Paris alone, where they visited five thousand poor families, or an average of twenty thousand individuals, which represented one-fourth of the poor of that vast city. The conferences in France numbered five hundred, and there were others established in England, Belgium, Spain, America, so far off even as Jerusalem. Thus had the grain of mustard-seed, the smallest of all seeds, sprung up into a great tree, beneath whose branches a multitude of wayfarers found comfort and shade.

Ozanam always repudiated the title of founder of the society—"We were eight," he would affirm emphatically;

nevertheless the title and the glory have clung to him whom the others looked upon as their leader, and the animating spirit of their efforts. He deprecated the idea of its having a "founder" at all, or of laying any stress on the human instrumentality in works of the kind generally. "I firmly believe," he says, "that the most solid institutions are not those which man creates after his own fashion, with a deliberate purpose, and with elements of his own creation, but those which spring, as it were, from circumstances, and out of elements already existing."

About one month after the birth of the society, its members publicly unfurled their banner by a courageous act of faith, which Ozanam thus describes to his mother:—

"*June* 19, 1833.

". . . If I were to tell you that on the Feast of Corpus Christi three harebrained young gentlemen sallied forth from Paris by the Champs Elysées, at eight o'clock in the morning, I should probably excite your curiosity; if I announced to you that at ten o'clock thirty students were following the procession at Nanterre, I should no doubt edify your piety; if I were to add that at six o'clock in the evening two-and-twenty of the said students were comforting the inward man round a table at St. Germain-en-Laye, I should mystify you still more; finally, if I confided to you that on the stroke of midnight, or thereabouts, three youths knocked at the door of No. 7 Rue des Grés,[1] that they were all three in high good-humour, that their legs were shaky, and their shoes covered with dust, and that, moreover, one of the three rejoices in chestnut locks and a broad nose and grey eyes, which are not quite unknown to you;—if I were to relate all this, my good little mother, what would you say? You would most cer-

[1] The house where Frederic lodged after leaving M. Ampère's.

tainly cry out, 'Halloa! this looks very like a dangerous lark!' Well, now I see that I have struck the right chord, and lighted on one day in the year whose history is safe to interest you.

"You know that in Paris, as at Lyons, religious processions are prohibited; but it does not follow that because a certain number of roughs choose to pen up Catholicism in its temples in the great cities, we young Catholics should be deprived of one of the most touching ceremonials of our religion; accordingly, some of us determined to follow the procession at Nanterre, the quietest of little villages, the birthplace of the gentle Saint Geneviève.

"Sunday dawned serene and cloudless, as if heaven intended to adorn the festival with its own splendour. I set off early with two friends, and we arrived the first at the humble rendezvous. By degrees the little group increased, and we were soon thirty. First came all the intellectual aristocracy of the Conference—Lallier, Lamache, Cherruel, a converted St. Simonian, de la Noue, who writes such charming verses; then came natives of Languedoc, of Franche-comté, Normans, and last, but not least, Lyonnese; several wore moustaches, and six of the band measured five feet eight inches. We dispersed and fell in with the peasants who followed the canopy; it was such a pleasure to elbow these good people, to sing with them, and to see their naïve astonishment at our fine appearance and our piety! The procession was numerous, and the decorations full of simple elegance; all the houses were festooned, and the roads strewn with flowers. The faith and piety that we beheld on all sides it would be difficult to describe; some venerable old men, who were too feeble to walk in the procession, waited at the threshold of their doors for it to pass; it was principally in front of their houses that the altars were erected; the ceremony lasted nearly two

hours. Then we assisted at high mass, where the crowd overflowed from the open church-doors into the street. When it was all over, Henri, I think, proposed that we should go and dine at St. Germain. Six or eight poltroons cried out about the distance; we let them cry and turn their steps towards home, and the remaining twenty-two, in groups of three or four only, so as not to make any disturbance, set forth, kicking up the dust on the road to St. Germain. Pleasure gave wings to our heels; we gathered wild strawberries in the woods as we went, and in due time arrived at the end of our walk. We went into the church for a quarter of an hour while vespers were going on, then we visited the grand old castle, so rich in memories, so proud of its antiquity.

"Then, having disported ourselves some time on the terrace, we took ourselves off to a worthy innkeeper, who undertook to spread the board for forty sous a head. Here comes the ticklish part of the day's entertainment! How many heroes have been conquered by the seductions of the dessert! How many sages have seen their wisdom break like brittle glass at the contact of the foaming bottle of champagne! We were wise enough to flee the temptation; the modest Maconnais, doubly baptised by mine host and his guests, was the only wine admitted to the feast. So, dear mother, no one rolled under the table, nobody burdened the shoulders of any one else with a melancholy load! We started homewards in the cool of the evening; the moon rose presently, and lighted us through the forest; it was a delicious hour. . . . As night closed in we lost sight of each other; some took the omnibus at Neuilly; two of my comrades walked with me to my own door. Monday had begun. Only my heart can tell how often I thought of you during this day, one of the most charming of my life."

This brave manifestation on the part of the Catholic students was not without its effect, and it was significant of the ground they had gained, that although the adventure was quickly circulated through the ranks, not a single word of ridicule was spoken about it, or the bold young confessors.

But these humble individual protests did not satisfy Ozanam. He felt that, as the evil was greatest amongst the most cultivated intellectual classes, it should be attacked there before any deep or lasting reform could be hoped for. For this warfare, however, a powerful and brilliant champion was needed, and where was he to be found?

God, meanwhile, was preparing His weapon.

CHAPTER VIII.

1834.

THE history of the Church offers no parallel to the fall of M. de Lamennais and the scattering of the brilliant galaxy of writers and orators of which that misguiding star had made itself the centre. His disciples, stunned at first, could hardly believe in so great a fall. They strove to arrest the master on the brink of the abyss, pleading with him like children striving to save a father from suicide; they left nothing untried,—remonstrance, entreaties, caresses; they clung to him to the last; then, seeing that all was in vain, they left him sorrowfully, and each went his way.

The Abbé Gerbet withdrew into solitude, and in course of time gave to the world those works which, for suavity and grace, have been so often likened to the style of Fénélon.

M. de Montalembert had plunged into the dusky shadows of Benedictine lore, from which he was one day to emerge, holding in his hand the Life of St. Elizabeth, that incomparable story where the delicate graces of an artist and the kindling enthusiasm of a biographer are blended with the rigid accuracy of an historian.

The Abbé Lacordaire, after a period of seclusion and study, was the first to stand forth once more in public life,—public at least compared with the profound isolation which had preceded it.

The history of the great Dominican has been amply written, and is already familiar to the greater number of our readers; but they may not be so generally aware that a portion of his career, its most brilliant one, was closely, though silently, connected with Frederic Ozanam. We are not therefore straying from our subject by a digression which tends to show where Ozanam's influence touched the destinies of the orator whose genius and sanctity may have had their own share in influencing the destinies of France.

The anti-Christian spirit which Ozanam and his little army were combating so strenuously was deep-seated as ever in those high centres where the youth of France came to look for intellectual guidance and inspiration. The Sorbonne had been more guarded in its utterances of late, but its philosophy was none the less deeply imbued with the spirit of infidelity. Jouffroy and his colleagues were steadily carrying on the crusade of Atheism against God, of Voltairianism and rationalism against the Gospel. What was needed to cope with these men was a theologian, who was at the same time a man of genius, who would unite science and learning and eloquence to faith, and would thus have sufficient prestige, in the first instance, to gain a hearing for an unpopular subject. Ozanam felt that this was the only remedy which could be applied with any chance of success. One day, on coming out of the Sorbonne from one of these displays of sophistry and false science, he observed to a companion, "What we want is a man of the present time, young like ourselves, whose ideas sympathise with ours, that is, with the aspirations and struggles of the young men of our day." Where was this man, this theologian uniting eloquence, holiness, learning, science, and modern sympathies to be found? There were able and eloquent divines amongst the clergy of Paris, but

they were all elderly, most of them old men, and all cast in the venerable but antique mould of St. Sulpice, which had given so many learned and devout priests to France, but which, if we may apply so unseemly a word to such a subject, had gone out of fashion. Their mode of preaching belonged to a period that had passed away; the young sceptics and sophists of the day were not to be lured into the churches by sermons which they knew would be cast in the identical form the world had been used to for generations and grown tired of; they did not care about Christian doctrine, and would listen to no exposition of truths they had ceased to believe in, unless it was presented to them in the guise of some attractive novelty; for it was simply a question of preaching the gospel to a generation which was practically as ignorant of it, and more antagonistic, than the Gentiles whom the twelve apostles went forth to evangelise. It was not a question, as in the middle ages, or even the seventeenth century, of converting men to repentance, of waking them up to the terrors of God's wrath; the very foundations for such an apostolate no longer existed; there was, so to speak, no basis of operation for it. If Bossuet himself had come back to life and preached the glowing sermons which electrified the dissolute court of Louis Quartorze, he would have produced no effect on the sceptics of the nineteenth century beyond exciting their admiration of his eloquence; his thunders would have waked no more echo in their souls than the roaring of the lion does from the trees of the forest. What did it avail to draw vivid pictures of the last day, of hell and judgment, and the wrath of an angry God, before the eyes of men who had ceased, and whose fathers had ceased, to believe in those awful truths, who acknowledged no God but their own bodies, and bowed to no divinity but their own reason? It had all to be begun

from the very beginning, and it must be done by one whose voice was attuned to the spirit of the century, while faith lifted him beyond it and above it.

Henri Lacordaire was essentially a child of this sceptical age; the burning breath of unbelief had swept over his soul, and for a few young, precious years, dried up the fountains of faith, until a touch from the finger of God caused the waters to gush forth purer and more abundant than ever. The experience had been full of peril, but it had done its work, and left behind it, in Lacordaire's heart, a bond of sympathy and intelligence with those undergoing the same trial, which constituted, to the last, one of his most persuasive arms.

His first oratorical successes were achieved in Paris in the chapel of the Collége Stanislas, where the superior, the Abbé Buquet, had invited him to come and address the pupils. He also preached a sermon at St. Roch, but it was written out and composed after the usual model of sermons, and proved a complete failure. Every one left the church saying, "The Abbé Lacordaire will never be a preacher." He thought so himself. "It is clear to me that I have not sufficient physical power, nor sufficient flexibility of mind, nor sufficient comprehension of the world, where I have always lived and always shall live in solitude, in a word, sufficient of anything that goes to make a preacher in the real sense of the word."[1] At the same time his impromptu discourses in the College Chapel met with a success that filled him with consolation. "The young suit me," he writes; "whenever I have been called upon to address them in our college chapels, I have done some good." And he adds to M. de Montalembert, "If I am ever destined to utilise my powers for the Church, it must be in the apologetical style, that is to say, in that

[1] Letter to M. Lorrain, 6 Mai 1833.

form which gathers up the glories and beauties of the history and polemics of religion in order to exalt Christianity in the minds of the hearers, and by this means compel their belief in it." Ozanam, who had heard the Abbé Lacordaire at Stanislas, drew precisely the same conclusion as to the direction of his gifts and the nature of his mission. "There is the man we want to confound Jouffroy and his school!" he cried on issuing from one of these wonderful improvisations. Here was the man he had dreamed of and longed for as the champion of the gospel against the infidels and sophists of the Sorbonne. And immediately the thought occurred to him that if they could obtain from the Archbishop of Paris a series, not of sermons, but of conferences at Nôtre Dame by the Abbé Lacordaire it would be a glorious gain.

He confided this idea to two law students, great friends of his, M. Lejouteux and M. de Montazet; they fell in with it enthusiastically, and, with that delightful spontaneity of youth which believes in all it hopes, they settled off-hand to go next day and propose the thing to Monseigneur de Quélen.

The Archbishop was then lodging at the convent of Les Dames de St. Michel, Rue St. Jacques, his palace having been burned down in the Revolution of 1830.

Monseigneur de Quélen was the type of a noble ecclesiastic, gracious, simple, and possessing at the same time a stateliness of demeanour and a dignity of manner which commanded admiration and inspired respect. He received the three young men with great kindness, listened to them with interest, and promised to give their proposal immediate thought. He explained to them, at the same time, that he saw grave impediments in the way. Emboldened by his condescension, they urged the state of public feeling, the absolute need of applying a remedy to the prevailing

hostility towards religion, and at last ventured timidly to mention the Abbé Lacordaire as the man most fitted for their design. Monseigneur de Quélen agreed with their views, and acknowledged the talent of their candidate, but still replied that there were many points to be considered before he could decide upon inaugurating a novelty such as they proposed. He conversed with them some time, and, while lamenting the infidelity and impiety of the times, declared that he was persuaded the dawn of a better day was at hand, and that they would live to see religion come triumphantly out of the present struggle.

"Yes," he added impressively, "I have the conviction that a crisis is at hand, and that God is preparing for Himself a signal victory."

He took leave of the three youths with emotion, gave them his blessing, and then clasping their three heads in one embrace, he said, "I embrace all the Catholic youth of France in your persons."

They went away very much elated by the half promise that had been held out to them. The impetus was now given, and the scheme must work its own way on to final accomplishment. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul took it up with the ardour of youthful neophytes, and the project grew in possibility from being discussed on all sides.

The Abbé Lacordaire, meantime, heard nothing of the plan which concerned him so closely. He was just then living in a convent situated in the remotest part of Paris, plunged in study, and as much aloof from the movement fermenting outside his room as if he had been buried in La Trappe. He was disturbed one day in his studious retreat by the Abbé Buquet, who had been much struck by the extraordinary effect which his few previous exhortations had produced on the pupils of the Collége Stanislas, and who came now to beg him to undertake a regular

course of "conferences" in their chapel. Lacordaire, who believed that this was precisely his appointed mission, consented at once. Ozanam and his friends knew nothing either of this proposal or its acceptance; but they still held to their idea that the Abbé Lacordaire was the man who should inaugurate the Conferences of Notre Dame; accordingly, just ten days before he began his lectures at the college Frederic determined to make another attempt with the Archbishop. He himself drew up a petition, ran about Paris till he got the signatures of two hundred Catholic students appended to it, and, accompanied this time by his friends Lallier and Lamache, set out once more to the Rue St. Jacques.

Ozanam passed all his life for being extremely shy and timid, but in reality he was neither; he was too innately simple to be shy in the ordinary sense, and his apparent timidity was but an excess of modesty which made him keep in the background while there was any one else to take the initiative, but when he was called upon to do it, he did so with perfect self-possession.

The Archbishop received him and his companions with even greater cordiality than on Frederic's first visit, encouraged the latter to speak freely, and was impressed by the clearness and depth of his views, his judgment of the times, their necessities and characteristics. The sagacity he displayed would have been remarkable in a man of mature years; in a boy of twenty it was surprising. Monseigneur de Quélen assured him that he had not forgotten their conversation of eight months past; that he had turned the subject in his mind, and had determined to have a course of sermons preached at Notre Dame by the best preachers of the day.

But this was not what the young men wanted. The audience they wished to reach would never go to a sermon;

the name in itself would be a repellent force, no matter how able the preacher might be. What the petitioners wanted was something entirely out of the beaten track—lectures or conferences where the vital questions then agitating the schools would be handled in a brilliant and polemical manner, where religion would be presented in its relations with society, and where the teaching of the anti-Christian press and periodicals of France and Germany would be indirectly met and combated. No man of the present day, Ozanam urged, was so qualified for this mission as the Abbé Lacordaire. He was well known to the public through the law-suit before the Chamber of Peers, where, in company with M. de Montalembert, he had displayed such magnificent forensic talent. He held the popular sympathies more than any ecclesiastic in France, and he was esteemed by Catholics as a devout, disinterested, and zealous priest.

Monseigneur de Quélen admitted all this, but still he hesitated. At last, pressed into a corner by the entreating of the young men, he said he thought he saw a way of satisfying them, and that he would certainly do something. As he spoke the door opened, and M. de Lamennais was announced.

The fears which for a moment had filled the hearts of the great journalist's disciples were lulled of late; no one dreamed that M. de Lamennais was at heart a traitor, and on the eve of stabbing the Church with a parricidal hand; still, considering recent events, the extreme cordiality of the Archbishop's greeting caused some little surprise to Frederic and his companions. He ran forward and embraced M. de Lamennais, and then, still holding him by the hand, he said, turning to the young men, "Gentlemen, here is the man who would suit you. Ah! if the feebleness of his voice would only permit him to preach, we

should have to throw open the great doors to let in the crowd, and even then the Cathedral would not be vast enough to hold the numbers who would flock round his pulpit!"

"Alas! Monseigneur, my career is ended," replied M. de Lamennais sadly.

It was indeed ended,—Monseigneur de Quélen little guessed how fatally. He little dreamed, while thus lavishing marks of confidence and esteem on that brilliant genius, and designating him to the youth of France as the powerful and accredited champion of the faith, that M. de Lamennais had already sent the MS. of his *Paroles d'un Croyant* to M. de Sainte-Beuve, begging him to hurry on the publication as quickly as possible; and yet for at least a fortnight after this he kept up the semblance of submission to the Holy See, and outward deference to its representatives. His mere presence at the Archbishop's on this day was an act of treason, and the motive of the visit still remains unknown.

The young men withdrew, leaving their petition in the hands of his Grace. They had done it all very quietly; no one but themselves knew of the visit. Their surprise and vexation may therefore be imagined on reading a full account of it in the columns of the *Univers* next day. Lamache at once confessed himself the culprit. He had confided the story to an indiscreet friend, who had evidently betrayed them to the *Univers*. The two others rushed off immediately to the Rue St. Jacques—Lamache was ashamed to go with them—to make their apologies to the Archbishop. He was more amused than annoyed, and consoled instead of rebuking them; "I had not seen the article," he said good-humouredly, "but it is just like those newspapers!" He pressed them to his heart, and then conducting them to the door of an adjoining *salon*, he said they would find

there the preachers whom he had charged to carry out their wishes, and that they could not do better than go in and talk over the matter with *ces Messieurs* whilst he was taking his breakfast.

The young men were terribly disappointed. The seven preachers to whom they were thus suddenly introduced did not in the least realise their plan. They obeyed the Archbishop, however, and opened their programme with frankness and simplicity. The assembled ecclesiastics, amongst whom were some of the lights of the French clergy, were astounded by the boldness and novelty of the design; but the young men held their ground, and presently the discussion became warm and excited on both sides; three of the preachers alone took a direct part in it, the others listening and chiming in with notes of approval or disapprobation. Ozanam, who had not sat down, was arguing the point with an elderly vicar, who was especially scandalised at the "novelty" of the scheme, and held forth in a loud voice, backing as he spoke, and gesticulating with great vehemence, while Ozanam, advancing as the other backed, displayed a corresponding warmth of manner. The discussion was at its height, when suddenly the door opened, and the majestic figure of the Archbishop appeared upon the threshold. Ozanam, who had his back to the door, was made aware of his presence by his interlocutor suddenly thrusting out his arms as if to keep somebody off, while he cried out entreatingly, "Monseigneur, nous nous entendons parfaitement avec ces Messieurs!"

"Ah!" replied the Archbishop, surveying the scene with a smile; "si vous ne vous entendez pas, au moins on vous entend!" and he laughingly withdrew.

The opinion of the ecclesiastics prevailed. A series of sermons was opened at Notre Dame on the 16th of February. In spite of the undeniable talent and zeal of the

seven preachers, the result entirely justified Ozanam's predictions. The want of unity in the design, inevitable from the variety of the preachers, marred the effect of the whole, and the fact of their being all priests of the old school prevented curiosity, and failed to attract any portion of the public they were specially intended to reach.

This very public, meantime, was crowding into the small chapel of the Collége Stanislas, where the Abbé Lacordaire was pouring out his improvised addresses every Sunday. The first of these took place on the 19th of January 1834.

There were one hundred free seats in the chapel, and on this first day many were unoccupied, but on the following Sunday every one was taken long before the conference began, and the Sunday after that again the affluence was so great that the pupils were sent away to make room for the strangers, who before long numbered six hundred. Amongst them were some of the most illustrious names in France, Châteaubriand, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Sainte-Beuve, etc.; Christians and sceptics, royalists and republicans, all came indiscriminately, drawn by the power of genius. Berryer, who had been in attendance from the beginning, arrived late one day and found the doors closed; he sent in haste for a ladder and got in through a window; the same thing happened to Châteaubriand. There could be no doubt but that the Abbé Lacordaire had found out the secret of his audience. The "old formula was swallowed up," the antique mould was broken; instead of a sermon written out beforehand, beginning with a text, divided into heads, and abundantly fortified with Latin quotations from the old fathers, the speaker stood up and spoke from the fulness of an overflowing heart; it was a spontaneous utterance, ardent, impassioned, a young mountain-torrent bearing down all before it in its magnificent and sparkling

impetuosity. His whole being preached; his eye, like a flame, kindled where it fell; his voice was not modulated to the grave and measured tones of the conventional type, but rang out natural and unrestrained, now piercing, now persuasive, now supplicating, now menacing. Père Lacordaire has been called a revolutionary; even to this day there are to be found some who apply the term to him as a stigma and a reproach; in one sense the accusation is perfectly just: he made a revolution in the pulpit. But it was entirely in the outward form that he revolutionised it. The subjects were the same immemorial ones that have been preached from all the pulpits of Christendom since St. Peter and Paul to our own day—God, Creation, the origin of evil, original sin, the redemption, human nature, the prophecies, the Incarnation; there was no novelty in all this, nor in his interpretation of the doctrines embodied in each subject; nothing was new except the mode of treatment, rendered irresistible by the genius of the orator. The stereotyped preacher had become a personal presence, a soul identified with the souls he was addressing, sharing their fears, understanding their doubts, sympathising with their hopes, an apostle longing to convince them, to win them to God by the contagion of his own faith, filled with too mighty a compassion to leave any room for scorn. M. de Montalembert, speaking of Henri Lacordaire as he saw him shortly before this period of his life, describes him as the impersonation of "virtue armed for the defence of truth." And the master touch paints him well. Like David in the flower of his shepherd days, when he came down and slew Goliath, Lacordaire stood forth in the bright meridian of his youth, girt with a warrior's courage, and strong with the strength of his consecrated virgin heart, ready to give battle to the enemies of his God.

The effect was like nothing the world had seen since the days of Bossuet. Ozanam, who was always one of the earliest in the chapel with his body-guard of St. Vincent de Paul, listened entranced and inconsolable. Why was this glorious apostolic voice confined within narrowing college walls, instead of waking the echoes of the grand Cathedral! He resolved that nothing should deter him from pursuing the project which, now more than ever, he felt to be well inspired. While waiting and working for its fulfilment let us see how it fared with the young student in his own life and personal concerns. For this purpose we cannot do better than refer to some of his letters.

CHAPTER IX.

1834-5.

TO FALCONNET.

"*January* 7, 1834.

"I AM undergoing, at this moment, one of the most painful trials perhaps that life has in store for us,—uncertainty as to my vocation. All this is between ourselves; but such is the flexibility and weakness of my character, that there is no study, no work which does not possess a certain charm for me, and in which I cannot fairly succeed, while there is not a single one capable of absorbing all my faculties and concentrating my powers. I cannot occupy myself with any one thing without thinking of a score of others, and yet, you know, no work can be great unless it be *one*. I used to fancy, in my ignorance, that it was possible to be at one and the same time a *savan* and a barrister; but, now that my legal studies are drawing to a close, I must choose between the two; I must put my hand in the urn, and shall I draw a black number or a white one? I am surrounded, in a certain way, by seductions of every sort; I am sought after, put forward, pushed, as it were, into a career foreign to my studies; because it so happens that God and education have endowed me with a certain grasp of ideas, and a certain breadth of observation, people want to set me up as a sort of leader of the Young Catholic party. A number of young men, of great merit, favour me with a degree of esteem of which I feel most unworthy, and men of mature age make

advances to me. I must take the lead in every movement; and when there is anything difficult to be done, I must bear the burden of it. They cannot hold a meeting, a conference of law or literature, but I must take the chair; five or six reviews and newspapers want articles from me; in one word, a number of circumstances, independent of my will, besiege and pursue me, and drag me from the path I had traced out for myself.

"I am not prompted by vanity in telling you all this; on the contrary, I feel so keenly my own insufficiency —I, who am not yet twenty-one—that all these compliments and eulogies humiliate me, and make me often inclined to laugh at my own importance. But it is in truth no laughing matter; I sometimes endure downright torture from the fear that all this incense may go to my head and intoxicate me, and thus cause me to miss what I have hitherto considered as my proper career, the one which the wishes of my parents pointed out, and towards which I myself felt willingly drawn; and yet this convergence of outward circumstances, may it not be an indication of God's will? I cannot tell; and in my perplexity I do not rush forward, nor make a single step in advance, but stand quietly and resist, and then, when the pressure is too great, I give way. For some time past,—above all, since I have seen some very young men laid low by death,—life has worn a different aspect to me. Although I never gave up the practice of my religion, the idea of the other world had not sunk deeply enough into my heart, and I only began now to realise that I had not hitherto been mindful enough of two companions who are always walking by our side, even when we do not notice them,—*God* and *death*. I began to feel that Christianity had been to me hitherto a sphere of thought, a sphere of worship more than a sphere of action, of intention, of morality. Silvio Pellico's

writings especially brought this home to me; and the more I dwell on it, the more I feel myself grow in disinterestedness, in kindness, and in peace. I seem to understand better the conditions of life, and to have more courage to go forth and meet them; it seems to me also that I am less proud than I used to be. Don't fancy, for all this, that I have turned saint or hermit. I am unluckily a long way off from the former, and I have no vocation for the latter. While feeling all that I have described, I contrive to be very jolly, asking nothing better than to enjoy myself, busying myself, perhaps rather too much, with literature, history, and philosophy, doing a little law, and, as usual, losing a good deal of time."

He said truly; the "jolly" element was not excluded from this thoughtful life, but its manifestations were of the most innocent kind. Some of the survivors of those bright days still recall, with a thrill of the old merriment, a certain memorable soirée given by Ozanam, to which the guests were invited to bring their own chairs, his apartment only boasting of three. A procession of young gentlemen was, accordingly, seen one evening filing down the Rue des Grés, each carrying a chair on his head, to the infinite amusement of the public, who trooped after them, while the laughter of the chair-bearers themselves endangered their own and their chairs' equilibrium, and brought out the concierge in amazement to inquire the meaning of the singular *cortége*. About eleven o'clock they came down again, holding their chairs aloft as before, and quite as steadily, for the hospitality of their host had been as simple as it was cordial, sirops and little cakes being the only excesses indulged in. "But oh! how we did enjoy ourselves!" exclaimed the narrator from whom we hold the story; "we nearly died of laughter, and between times there was such

earnest, enthusiastic talk on so many deep subjects. I don't believe young men know how to amuse themselves or laugh now-a-days, as we used to do; they want so much money for everything; we used to be jolly on nothing at all!"

TO HIS MOTHER.

"16*th May* 1834.

"According as one grows older, and sees the world nearer, one finds how hostile it is to all one's ideas and most cherished sentiments. The more one sees of men, the more one discovers their immorality and selfishness, —pride in the learned, foppery in men of the world, coarse debauchery amongst the people. When one has been brought up in the pure atmosphere of a Christian family, the sight of all this turns one aside with disgust and indignation, and inclines one to murmur and curse. But the gospel forbids it, and tells us to devote ourselves, heart and soul, to this same society which repulses and despises us. One feels all this deeply at my age, and those realities which destroy one's illusions leave me often sombre and grave as a man of forty. I feel that my duty is to fill some place, but I cannot see where it is; ambitions are so numerous, and capacities so multiplied and various, that it is difficult to break through the lines. How can a poor little ear of wheat pierce its way up through the masses of tares growing all around it? And then, even if I saw my place clearly marked out, I want the necessary energy to fill it; you know this is the constant burden of my complaint,—irresolution and frailty. I never can say to-day, 'I will do this,' and then to-morrow do it. But perhaps, after all, I am too young, and it is wrong of me to worry myself so, and to want to be a grown man when I am still so near childhood in many points; but I cannot forget that this year my education will be finished,

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and that in the month of August I may be a barrister it I wish—I, a barrister! After all, it is no great things, a barrister."

Frederic had no taste for politics, and troubled himself little about them, although he was destined later to exercise a certain indirect political influence in his sphere. The following letter, written at this period, will be read with interest. The opinions it expresses were, as we shall see, those to which he adhered throughout his life:—

"As to political opinions, I should like to see the annihilation of the spirit of politics for the benefit of the social spirit. I have for the old royalty all the respect which one owes to a glorious invalid, but I would not lean on him, because with his wooden leg he could not keep pace with the new generation. I neither deny nor repudiate any combination of government; I regard them all merely as instruments for making mankind happier and better. If you must have a formula, here it is:—

"I believe in authority as a means, in liberty as a means, in charity as an end.

"There are two principal kinds of government, and these two kinds may be animated by opposite principles.

"Either it is the sacrificing (*exploitation*) of all to the profit of one, as in the monarchy of Nero—a monarchy which I abhor.

"Or it is the sacrifice of one to the profit of all, as in the monarchy of St. Louis, which I revere and love.

"Or it is the sacrificing of all for the profit of each one, as in the republic of the Terror, and this republic I curse.

"Or it is the self-sacrifice of each one for the benefit of all; and this is the Christian republic of the primitive Church of Jerusalem. Perhaps it may be also that of the end of time, the highest state to which humanity can rise.

"Every government is respectable in my eyes, insomuch as it represents the Divine principle of authority. In this sense I understand the *omnis potestas* of St. Paul. But I think that in every government the sacred principle of liberty should be admitted, and I believe that we may energetically defend this principle, and that we may raise our voice in stern and courageous accents to warn the authority which sacrifices it instead of sacrificing itself. Speech is meant to be the dam which should be opposed to power; it is the grain of sand against which the waves break.

"Opposition is useful and admissible, but not insurrection; active obedience, passive resistance; the *Prigione* of Silvio Pellico, not *les Paroles d'un croyant.*

"You and I are too young just now to take any part in the social struggle, but this does not compel us meantime to remain idle in the midst of the world suffering and groaning around us. A preparatory way is open to us before trying to aid in the public good; we may do good to a few before regenerating France; we may succour a few of her poor sons. This is why I *long to see all young men who have intelligence and heart united in some scheme of charity, that thus a vast and generous association* for the relief of the poorer classes might be formed all over the country."

The holidays of 1834 were spent at Lyons in the quiet circle of his family. Frederic's impression of the changes which had taken place during his absence of two years is thus described to Lallier:—

"I feel almost a stranger here after two years' absence. Old acquaintances are gone; little cousins have made their appearance during my exile; older ones have gone through their philosophy, and are getting ready to go to Paris. Some have got married, others have lost their wives. My old confessor is dead, and nearly

all the priests in the parish have been changed. The town itself is changed. The cannon of the 'journées' of April have destroyed some of the houses, but, by way of compensation, our hills are crowned with brand-new fortresses, with green glacis and white walls, and cannons of the finest bronze. Trade is nowhere, and the workmen are emigrating to Switzerland; but then we have a splendid garrison, reviews, practising of fire-arms, patrols, and sentries at every step. The quays are carpeted with uniforms, and long sabres ring pleasantly on the pavement and in the public squares; if a few manufactories are empty, what then? prisons, and those haunts which supply them with inmates, are full to overflowing. In many places the cannons and bullets have damaged entire neighbourhoods, so that the fronts of the shops have to be completely rebuilt. In fact I can hardly recognise this poor old city of Lyons. On the other hand, I have found some new joys awaiting me here. Our family from Florence has come to live here; my uncle and aunt and cousins are most affectionate and kind to me; add to this the love of my parents and my two brothers, and you will say I ought to be satisfied; that this is enough. Well now, my dear L., I think I may say it, without ingratitude to Providence, it is not enough. God has placed in our souls two cravings which resemble each other, but which we must not confound. We want kindred to cherish us, but we also want friends who are attached to us. The tenderness that springs from blood, and the affection that springs from sympathy, are two distinct enjoyments which we cannot do without, and neither of which can replace the other. The love of kindred is the more sacred of the two, because it is planted in the heart of God Himself; friendship, on the other hand, is the more seductive, from being our own achievement."

TO LALLIER.

"Of all my recent pleasures the greatest has been a pilgrimage to St. Point to see M. de Lamartine. Dufieux, who knows him, had asked permission to bring me. We set out together one Sunday morning for Macon, where we arrived towards evening, after passing through a charming country; there we heard that M. de Lamartine was at his Château de St. Point, five leagues beyond Macon, in the mountains. Accordingly on Monday morning after breakfast we started in a light *char-à-banc*, driven by a small charioteer in rags, who took us over the road of the ancient and celebrated Abbey of Cluny; when we had admired from a distance the ruins of this old house of God, we struck off to the left through the wide and beautiful valley where the great man's abode is situated. On a knoll at the foot of the mountains there is a little village, overshadowed by a semi-Gothic church and a castle; the castle belonged formerly to the dreaded Count of St. Point, who rivalled in cruelty the Baron des Adrets. The hamlet consisted, twenty years ago, of a group of coarse, ignorant, and wicked peasants. M. de Lamartine has civilised the entire place; he repaired, enlarged, and embellished the castle; he rebuilt the steeple; he has bought a house to serve for a hospital and schools; he has opened roads to establish communications between the village and the high-road, and he is at this moment building a magnificent bridge over a ravine. These improvements have drawn numerous inhabitants to the valley; white houses are rising on every side, and the whole region wears an aspect of ease and content; the manners of the people have become pure and gentle, and the stranger who comes to visit the poet meets good folks at every turn who volunteer to serve him as guides. And now here we are at the

gates of the castle! An elegant Gothic porch adorns the entrance, while three lordly towers lend it a somewhat majestic appearance. We cross the threshold of the *salon*, where Madame de Lamartine greets us with the utmost kindness; she is an excellent lady, good and pious, an Englishwoman converted to the Catholic faith. It so happened that this day there were a great many people at St. Point, an English family amongst others, so we saw to our disappointment that we should not be able to enjoy the undivided society of him whom we had come so far to see. At last M. de Lamartine himself appeared. Nothing could be more friendly than the way he welcomed Dufieux, and he received me with the greatest affability. He took us off to a pavilion, where we sat chatting, all three, for nearly two hours. He explained to us his large and generous political views, and his beautiful literary theories; he asked innumerable questions concerning the young men of the colleges of to-day, and the spirit which animates them, and seemed full of hope in the future. His ideas are linked together with solid logic, his language is picturesque and brilliant; he thinks more like a philosopher than a poet, and speaks more like a poet than a philosopher. I have rarely seen a man who combines more noble qualities. He is fifty-three years of age, and bears on his countenance the impress of sorrow borne with dignity, and of glory accepted with modesty. His forehead is very broad, his eyes large and bright, the lines of his mouth at once gracious and severe, his features are thin, his height commanding.

"At table and in the *salon* he struck me as full of charm; he pressed us cordially to remain and spend a week with him, and as we could not do this, he made us promise to go and see him in Paris this winter. We dined, slept, and next day he took us to see his two other houses of Milly

and Monceaux. All along the road, the peasants saluted him with an air of affection; he accosted them and chatted with them, inquiring about their vintage, their affairs, and their families; they all seemed to love him, and the children ran after him, calling out *Bon jour, Monsieur Alphonse!* At Monceaux I found M. de Pierreclare; we dined together, and in the evening took leave of our illustrious host and relapsed into our native obscurity."

These pleasant episodes did not distract Ozanam's mind unduly from graver interests. Amidst the pleasures of his holiday he was mindful of the poor and their friends of St. Vincent de Paul.

TO M. X.

"I think you have taken what was best worth taking amongst us in seizing a charitable idea, which was latent in your own heart, no doubt, but had not yet found its outward expression. In a work like this, I think we should abandon ourselves much more to the inspiration of our heart than the calculations of our head. Providence sends us counsel and advice in the form of external circumstances, of thoughts and inspirations. I think you will do better to follow this guidance freely, and not hamper yourself with rules and formulas. Besides, the end which we propose to ourselves in Paris is not precisely the same, it seems to me, which you have in the provinces; we are birds of passage, at a distance from the paternal nest, and over whom that vulture, incredulity, hovers, hoping to make a prey of us; the first thing was therefore to gather these poor birds of passage under some sort of protecting shelter, and to form an association of *mutual encouragement* for Catholic young men, a centre where they would find friendship, support, and the stimulus of example; where the elders would welcome the new-comers from the provinces,

and give them a sort of moral hospitality. Now, the strongest tie, the principle of true friendship, is charity. Charity cannot exist in the hearts of many without outwardly overflowing; it is a fire that dies for want of being fed, and the food of charity is good works. Since we have been in existence we have distributed about two thousand four hundred francs, some books, and a pretty good quantity of old clothes. Our resources consist in the collection we make every Tuesday, the alms of some charitable persons who come to the rescue of our good-will, and our cast-off clothes. As it is possible that at the beginning of the new scholastic year our numbers will be increased to a hundred, we shall be obliged to divide, and split into several sections, which will all periodically hold a common meeting. When those new arrangements have been made, I will let you know. For, notwithstanding what I have just been saying of the difference which exists between our special aims, this should not diminish their union and harmony; on the contrary, just as divergent rays tend to the same centre, so should our various efforts, tending to different points, resolve themselves into the same motive and proceed from the same principle; we must therefore be united so as to double our strength, we must hold frequent communication with each other, so that we may all be stimulated and made proud and happy in common by the successes of each individually. In writing to our little society in Paris I begged leave to draw up a list of correspondents with your name at the head, and then those of your friends; this will not be an empty academical form, but a real correspondence, for which you may count on my punctuality as I count upon your friendship."

On his return to Paris after the holidays he writes to the same friend:—

"I did not forget the report that you asked me for. Our President, M. Bailly, looked for it amongst his papers, but has failed to find it; the document must therefore be lost. It is no great misfortune; there was perhaps a germ of pride in this written *résumé* of our work, and God, who forbids our left hand to know what our right hand does, may have allowed us to lose a title-deed whose only use was to gratify a foolish vanity. Charity should never look back, but always forward, for the number of her past benefits is always very small, while the present and future wants that she has to relieve are infinite. Look at the philanthropical societies, with their meetings, reports, summings-up, bills, and accounts; before they are a year old they have volumes of minutes and so forth. Philanthropy is a vain woman who likes to deck herself out in her good works, and admire herself in the glass; whereas charity is a mother whose eyes rest lovingly on the child at her breast, who has no thought of self, but forgets her beauty in her love. Neither do I consider this loss of much consequence to you. It is better that you should raise your work by your own strength, under the inspiration of your own heart, according to local circumstances, and under the guidance of the venerable priest who presides over you; with all this you will easily do without a model which was at best very imperfect; you will not do as we did, but better than we did.

"This prediction is no flattery, it is simply the expression of the feeling inspired by your letter, of that apostolic fire which has inflamed the Christian world, and of which your soul has caught the sacred spark. It would have been selfish to keep such a pleasure all to myself; I felt I must communicate your glowing words to our little gathering, so I took your letter with me, and read the greater part of it to our colleagues and the curé of the

parish, who had kindly come to take the chair that day. The impression it produced will be best conveyed to you in the words of one of the members, who exclaimed, 'Truly this is the faith and the charity of the first centuries!' Oh! the faith and charity of the first centuries! It is not too much for ours. Are we not, like the Christians of those early times, thrown into the midst of a corrupt civilisation and a society that is falling to pieces? Cast your eyes on the world around you. The rich and the happy ones, are they much better than those who made answer to St. Paul, 'We will hear you another time'? And the poor and the people, are they much more enlightened and better off than those to whom the apostles first preached the gospel? Equal evils, therefore, demand an equal remedy; the world has grown cold, and it is for us Christians to rekindle the vital fire; for us also to re-open the era of martyrdom. For to be a martyr is possible to each of us; to be a martyr is to give ourselves up to God and our brethren, to give to Heaven all that we have received,—our goods, our blood, our whole being. This offering is in the hands of each of us; we can all make this sacrifice; it only remains to choose the altar whereon we will lay it, the divinity at whose shrine we will consecrate our youth and the days that are to follow; let us decide whether our rendezvous shall be in the temple of the idol of egotism, or in the sanctuary of God and of humanity. Humanity in our times is very much like the traveller in the Gospel: while journeying along the road traced out for it by Christ, it was seized upon by robbers, by wicked men, who despoiled it of all it possessed, the treasure of faith and love, and then left it naked and moaning, lying by the wayside. The priests and the Levites passed, and this time, as they were true priests and Levites, they drew nigh to the sufferer whom they fain would have

healed, but in his delirium he did not recognise them, and thrust them from him.

"Let us, in our turn, poor Samaritans that we are, weak and of little faith, draw near to the wounded man. Perhaps he will not take fright at us, being only what we are, but will let us try to probe his wounds and pour balm into them; let us breathe words of consolation and peace into his ear, and then, when his eyes are opened, we will place him in the hands of those whom God has constituted the guardians and physicians of souls, and who are, so to speak, our hosts on the road of our pilgrimage here below, since they feed our famished spirits with the word of life and the promise of a better world. This is the task that is before us, this is the divine vocation to which Providence calls us."

The resuming of Ozanam's studies was the signal for a return of the old scruples and anxieties from which we have already seen him suffering. He writes to one of his college friends, M. Dufieux:—

"My conscience does not spare me. I may say it to my own shame and the greater glory of God, nobody perhaps has received more than I have: good inspirations, holy desires, noble ambitions; there is no virtue, there is not a good work, moral or scientific, to which this mysterious inner voice has not at some time or other invited me; there is perhaps not a vine in the Father's vineyard that has been surrounded with more care, and to which He may with greater justice address those words, 'Quid potui facere vineæ et non feci?' But I, like an ill weed as I am, have not expanded under this divine breath, nor struck my roots deep into the soil that has so lovingly worked all around me. At this very moment, when the call from above is sounding in my ears, when I feel inspiration withdrawing from me as it were in warning, even at this

moment I cannot *will*, I cannot do, and I feel the weight of daily neglected responsibility gathering on my head.

"I pour out to you my feelings as they come, without order or forethought; but that you may the better believe me, and that your indulgent affection may not attribute this confession of weakness to a moment of passing excitement, I will explain myself more clearly.

"There are two things especially that fire us young Christians with a generous ardour, these are science and virtue. I was taught early to love both, and I fancied myself made for them. I had resolved on deeper studies and a more complete moral reform for those two years that I have to remain in the capital; I placed my hopes under the auspices of our celestial Mother, and I trusted much in my own good will. Well, since then, three months have slipped away, and here I am with my hands empty! Continual *malaise* and wearisome efforts began to quench my ardour, and when I at last found myself with full leisure and all needful facilities, I fell into a state of languor from which I cannot rouse myself. Study, that I so loved formerly, now fatigues me; my pen is like lead in my fingers; I can no longer write. *Strength*, that gift of the Holy Spirit so necessary to the men of this age if they are to traverse its perils without failing, *strength* is not in me. I am blown about by every wind of my imagination. Piety is a yoke to me, prayer a mere habit of the lips, the practice of Christianity a duty which I accomplish with cowardice, the last branch I cling to so as not to roll to the bottom of the abyss, but whose nourishing fruits I do not cull. I see young men of my age advancing proudly in the path of real progress, while I hang back, despairing of ever following them, and spending in idle lamentation the time I should be up and doing."

The month of March 1835, which opened in such de-

pression for Ozanam, had a great consolation and triumph in store for him, as we shall see in the next chapter.

In the autumn of this year we find the following letter

TO LALLIER.

"LYONS, *September* 23, 1835.

". . . You know I left Paris on the 12th, as I was anxious to be at Lyons for my mother's *fête* on the 15th; and also to hear mass on that day, it being the *fête* of the Blessed Virgin. I had therefore to halt at Macon, twelve miles from hence, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice, hoping to find a coach that would take me on later in the day; but I reckoned without my host, there was no conveyance to be had but shanks' mare, and so I had to spend the beautiful day of the Assumption tramping over the dusty road; at last, within a few leagues of Lyons, I came up with a shaky old trap that jogged me to my destination by eight in the evening, just as they were all assembled to wish my mother joy—father, mother, brothers, uncle, aunt, cousins, all were there, and I leave you to guess what a joyous meeting it was.

"But a certain sadness was mingled with this first embrace. The fears I had entertained about my mother's health were but too well founded. You remember that terrible day, and the sweet letter that I showed you? My terrors and grief were shared in the same degree by my father and my brothers. For two months my mother was a prey to a languid exhaustion of which it was impossible to foretell the end. Some grave symptoms were added to this weakness, and the fears of those who were near her at Lyons were no less acute than mine in Paris. Happily, before my return, a great improvement had taken place; she is no longer ill, but she still bears the traces of her recent sufferings; when I kissed her, I was frightened at

the thinness of her cheeks. I am at rest for the moment, but I cannot help trembling for the future. I cannot but see that this precious health is seriously shaken; that her sensitiveness has become excessive; that the most trifling thing distresses and alarms her; that her angelic sweetness and goodness are constantly struggling against a nervous and diseased organisation. And with all this she redoubles her good works, and imposes on herself an amount of fatigue which I, young and strong as I am, would recoil from. The thought of next winter fills me with anxiety. Dear friend, if you have two places to spare for me in your prayers, give the first one to my mother, and the other to myself; if you have only one, let it be for my mother; to pray for her is to pray for me.

"Added to these personal anxieties I found a general impression of terror prevailing at Lyons. The cholera, which has been making such fearful ravages in the southern provinces, seemed to be steadily advancing to our gates. It had come up the Rhone, within twelve leagues of our city, driving before it crowds of fugitives, who flew to us with the most frightful accounts, and brought with them a degree of terror worse even than the plague itself. Our impressionable city was terribly excited. The ignorant and brutal part of the population began to talk of poisoned waters, and to make ready for the invasion of the pestilence by riots and insurrection; while, on the other hand, a multitude of the faithful besieged Notre Dame de Fourvières, singing penitent canticles within the church, and in the open air outside; while numbers of devoted persons presented themselves to serve as nurses for the poor when the epidemic should have actually come. Fifteen hundred had their names inscribed beforehand.

"Well, God has for the second time glorified His Mother and consoled our city; once more His hand, which was

raised to threaten, has been opened to bless. The most ancient church of old Gaul, the church of Lyons, is proud, happy, and grateful for the magnificent privilege which has been granted to her. The name of the Dame de Fourvières no longer brings a smile to the lips of the sceptic, who cannot but think that to her protection he owes perhaps his life."

Ozanam alludes here to a circumstance which is spoken of to this day with emotions of lively gratitude by the faithful of Lyons, and with respect by all. In 1831 the cholera was raging fiercely in the surrounding towns, and had reached within a short distance of the city. The panic-stricken population rushed in thousands up the hill-side of Fourvières, and placing themselves under the protection of the Mother of God, vowed to commemorate their gratitude for their deliverance, if she obtained it, by painting a memorial-picture in her honour, and placing it in the church. The vow was heard; the pestilence advanced to the very gates of Lyons, and then suddenly halted; not a single case occurred in the city. In 1835 the same miraculous protection was granted to a similar manifestation of faith in Mary's power and clemency; nor has the charmed circle which she drew around the favoured city ever been broken since. In recent visitations the cholera has gone all round it, ravaging the immediate neighbourhood, but never entering Lyons. This fact is so well known, that as soon as a cry is raised announcing the approach of the dreaded visitor, great numbers flock in from the towns and villages, thus, humanly speaking, multiplying the chances of contagion by fright and overcrowding.

CHAPTER X.

1835-6.

THE extraordinary success of the Abbé Lacordaire's Conferences the year before had caused alarm in grave and influential quarters. The clergy looked on with a certain vague uneasiness at first, and then with absolute terror, at the popularity which was drawing all the intellect of Paris to the feet of the young preacher. Not a word was to be said against his orthodoxy, but the form and manner of its enunciation was novel, and novelty was next to heresy. Nothing was held in greater horror at archiepiscopal head-quarters than novelty. Lacordaire, who, before the end of the Conferences at the College, had been overpowered by invitations from the various *curés* in Paris to go and preach in their churches, went to consult the Archbishop as to which he should accept, and was dismayed to find the latter reluctant to let him continue the ministry of preaching at all. The Abbé Buquet counted on his resuming his Conferences at Stanislas in the course of the year, but the Archbishop appeared to hesitate at consenting even to this. He did not, however, venture to say so at once; he merely requested that Lacordaire would refrain from preaching anywhere during Lent; "Not," he added, "that I am jealous of talent, but it is better not to provoke invidious comparisons."

Lacordaire submitted without a word, and promised that he would not speak in public during Lent, but the Archbishop still hesitated about the Conferences, and said he must have eight days to think the matter over.

Meantime the enemies of the new apostle were bringing all influence to bear against him in the mind of the Archbishop. It was alleged that even the Government had taken fright and looked in displeasure at the spirit of revolution, nay, of anarchy, which pervaded the language of Lacordaire. It dreaded the effect of this exciting eloquence on the young men of Paris, and it was to be feared that, if the Conferences were resumed, they would witness the painful scandal of an intervention by the authorities. There was not the smallest foundation for any such fears on the part of the Government, and this representation of them was immensely exaggerated; but Monseigneur de Quélen, who did not see exactly where to distinguish between malice and hearsay, was exceedingly disturbed, so that when at the end of a week Lacordaire returned, he found him more nervous and vacillating than before. The fact of his having no definite grounds for his prohibition made it seem unjust and cruel. Lacordaire defended himself firmly, but with a certain calm indifference as to the issue. The Archbishop admitted that none of the theologians who had assisted at the Conferences had detected a single flaw in any part of his doctrine. "Then, Monseigneur," argued Lacordaire, "since my orthodoxy is above suspicion, what signifies the divided opinion of parties? What work, since the foundation of Christianity, was ever accomplished without giving rise to divided opinions?"

As to the political complications upon which his opponents laid stress, he denied their existence, but observed that if on investigation they were found to exist, he would

for the present renounce preaching anywhere. The Archbishop shrank from imposing this sacrifice upon the zealous young priest, and above all, upon the Catholic youth who were clamouring impatiently for him. If he had acted on the impulse of his own judgment, he would have desired Lacordaire to go on as he had begun; but his judgment was warped by pressure from those around him, and by his ingrained horror of novelty. The policy of the higher clergy at that time was to let well enough alone, to make no stir, above all to do nothing new, and to avoid giving any new impulse to the public mind, lest it should provoke opposition which it might be difficult to appease. Such a policy was, as we have seen, the very antipodes of that which animated Ozanam and his friends, who looked to Lacordaire as the herald of their cause.

But Lacordaire, much as it grieved him to disappoint these eager young spirits, and the multitude of others outside them, whose souls were longing for bread, refrained from pressing Monseigneur de Quélen too hard. When they were parting, the latter said, "I don't forbid you to resume the Conferences; I cannot do it; but reflect, examine, take counsel." He was very kind, but agitated and undecided. Lacordaire left his presence mentally determined not to resume them. He communicated this decision the same day to two or three intimate friends, who confirmed him in it. A few days' reflection, however, made them change their opinion as to its wisdom.

Lacordaire, likewise, who felt free to decide for himself, since the Archbishop had left him the right to do so, began to ask himself if it was just to others as well as to himself to disappoint these ardent expectations. "If," argued his friends, "you give up now, you give up for ever; the Archbishop has not forbidden you; on the contrary, personally he sympathises with you. Why yield to paltry

cavilling and prejudice?" A weightier argument than this was, that in lapsing into silence he was abandoning a mission which no one else could fulfil.

While Lacordaire was still hesitating, drawn one way by the desire to do whatever was most agreeable to his Archbishop, and the other by the longing to continue a fruitful ministry, the Superior of the Collége Stanislas received a message from the Archbishop informing him that the Conferences would not be resumed that year. Lacordaire was immediately apprised of this, and was wounded to the quick by what seemed to him a want of frankness and even justice on the part of Monseigneur de Quélen. He wrote to him and protested respectfully, but with the warmth of just indignation, against the stigma which this direct prohibition cast upon him. "Monseigneur," he cried, "I have but one talent; if I may not utilise it, I am reduced to nothingness as a priest. . . . Monseigneur, I ask for justice at your hands: I claim the one possession, the one honour of a priest,—the right to preach Jesus Christ, until at least I fail in orthodoxy, which is the first of all things, the thing which, with God's help, I will never fail in, never at least wilfully." There was no doubt a leaven of human feeling in this remonstrance; it would have been more perfect in the priest to have bowed down and accepted the humiliation in silence; but we must, on the other hand, consider that, at a period when manly independence was at a discount in all classes, the dignified bearing of the Abbé Lacordaire was a fine and salutary example. Monseigneur de Quélen, however, could not see it in this light; he was shocked at the vivacity of his young subordinate, but replied in a tone of gentleness and dignity, that he feared the perils of improvisation, and proposed to him, as a condition of resuming his Conferences, that he should write them out beforehand, and submit the MS. to the censure of

certain persons, who should be named for the purpose. Lacordaire knew from experience that such a plan would utterly paralyse his powers; he said so, and thanking the Archbishop for the intended kindness, declared his determination to renounce the Conferences altogether.

All this occurred in December. The sacrifice once made, Lacordaire was calm and satisfied. He could not help feeling, at the same time, that his position was perilously compromised. If the Archbishop allowed him to remain under this prohibition, it was tantamount to an interdict.

Ozanam and his friends meanwhile were in despair. Measuring the event by their own regrets and disappointment, they magnified it into a positive disaster. This feeling was shared by the Abbé Liautard, the founder of the Collége Stanislas, and its late Superior, who had made their cause his own. Whatever the result might be, this was a great moral victory, for the Abbé Liautard was a man whose opinion had greater weight perhaps than that of any ecclesiastic of the day in France; the clergy held him in high esteem for his zeal, piety, and learning, and the Government had, more than once, been compelled to reckon with him, on account of his influence with the noblest families in France, whose sons he had educated. The Abbé had seen, and appreciated better than any one, the effect of Lacordaire's Conferences in the college chapel; he had rejoiced as at the advent of a new prophet, and he was proportionately indignant on seeing the Archbishop's better judgment overruled by the puerile policy and petty jealousies of a narrow-minded party. He wrote a vigorous expostulation on the subject, condemning boldly the weakness of the Archbishop's conduct and administration, and this document was circulated in manuscript amongst the clergy of Paris, on whom it produced a great effect.

Early in January, about a month after Lacordaire's letter

to the Archbishop, when he had ceased almost to think of the painful episode, and was once more quietly absorbed in his studies, he was one day walking through the gardens of the Luxembourg, when a friend accosted him, and, after the usual salutations, remarked irrelevantly, "Why don't you go and see the Archbishop, and have an explanation with him?" The Abbé replied that there was nothing further to explain, and that he had no pretext for intruding on his Grace. Before he had gone many steps further he met another friend, who said almost in the same words, "Why don't you go and see Monseigneur de Quélen? I am sure he would be glad to see you, and to make it up with you."

Lacordaire, who was prone enough to see the finger of Providence in the events of daily life, was struck by the coincidence, and resolved on the spot to go at once to the Rue St. Jacques.[1] "It was not the portress who opened the door," he says; "it was a choir nun, who liked me, because, as she said, every one was down on me. Monseigneur had forbidden his door, it seemed, 'but,' said the sister, 'I will go and tell him it is you, and perhaps he will see you.' The answer was favourable. I found the Archbishop walking up and down the room with a *triste*, preoccupied air. He gave me but a slight sign of welcome, and I turned and walked up and down with him without his uttering a word. After a long silence, he stopped suddenly, and, looking at me with a scrutinising glance, said, 'I have a notion of confiding to you the pulpit of Notre Dame; would you accept it?' The sudden overture, the motive of which was entirely unknown to me, did not dazzle me in the least. I replied that the time for preparation was short, the theatre was solemn, that

[1] See Foisset's *Life of Lacordaire*, vol. i. chap. viii., for this incident and the foregoing details.

though successful before a small audience, I might easily fail before an assembly of four thousand souls. I ended by asking for twenty-four hours to reflect."

What meantime had worked the sudden revulsion in the mind of the Archbishop? He had that very morning seen the Abbé Liautard's pamphlet, and had just finished reading it when Lacordaire was unexpectedly announced. The idea of answering and confounding his own accusers, of appointing Lacordaire to the pulpit of Notre Dame for the Lenten sermons occurred to the Archbishop a moment before, and the coincidence of the young preacher's arrival when his mind was thus occupied about him, seemed providential, and Monsieur de Quélen carried out the impulse as we have seen.

It is needless to say how triumphantly the unpremeditated step was justified by the results. Never had the venerable walls of Notre Dame witnessed so magnificent a victory from its pulpit over the hearts of men. The young men of Paris were jubilant, none more so than Ozanam.

"These Conferences on the Church, her infallibility, her constitution, her history, etc., were all most beautiful," he writes; "but the last was eloquent beyond anything I ever heard. Monseigneur de Quélen, who was present at all of them, addressed at the end his solemn thanks to M. Lacordaire, and named him canon of the Cathedral. This does indeed pour balm into our wounds!" Nothing could be more generous than the way in which the Archbishop gave this public testimony of his admiration to the man whose influence he had for a moment so mistrusted. When the last words of the final Conference were spoken, and the vast assembly was about to kneel to receive the blessing of the Prelate, the latter rose, and with that incomparable majesty which lent such weight to his words in private

and in public, expressed his thanks to him, "on whom God had bestowed piety and eloquence, and, still more, that virtue which constitutes the priest—obedience!" He called him, moreover, his "faithful and excellent friend, the joy and consolation of his heart."

Looking back on those glorious days when the young ranks of St. Vincent de Paul closed, like the advance-guard of a victorious army, round the pulpit of Notre Dame, Lacordaire once exclaimed, with emotion, "Ah! Ozanam is an ancestor!"

Ozanam, in his turn, claimed for his illustrious friend a share in his own paternity towards the militia of charity, and always spoke of him as one of its early fathers. He certainly proved its chivalrous defender in the hour of peril. When a despicable cabal threatened it with suppression by the Government, Lacordaire, from his pulpit, appealed to the Catholic heart of France in behalf of those young men "who had placed their chastity under the guardianship of charity—the fairest of virtues under the fairest of guardianships."

"What blessings," he exclaimed, "will not this knighthood of youth, purity, and fraternity draw down upon France in behalf of the poor! Let the gratitude of the country prove at least the safeguard of its liberty."

We will close this chapter with a letter of Ozanam's:—

"PARIS, 16 *May.*

"In these days we have need of great virtues and strong men. It is true the reign of evil is being undermined in all directions, and the time is drawing near when truth will be hailed anew as queen of the world; but so long as the earthly life of humanity lasts, evil will still live in the midst of it; evil is always abroad somewhere on the earth,—sometimes as a tyrant, sometimes as a slave; and its efforts

are never so formidable as when it sees its empire threatened and in danger of escaping from its grasp; every religious reaction is sure to provoke a corresponding reaction of impiety. Thus it is that, while the idols of the eighteenth century see their shrines deserted, while our temples, so long forsaken, see their solitude repeopled, and the Abbé Lacordaire thunders forth the Word of God over an assembly of six thousand men, crowded into the mighty nave of Notre Dame, while these things are being accomplished, rationalism is not idle; it is busy multiplying its periodical literature, organising its seductive propaganda, casting its nets round the youth of the day, besieging our most illustrious men, causing the fall and ruin of those who but yesterday were our glory, dethroning the Abbé de Lamennais from the pure heights where faith and genius had placed him, making us tremble for the virginal muse of Lamartine. These things are sad, but they are true. We Catholics are punished for putting our trust rather in the genius of our great men than in the power of our God; we are punished for having prided ourselves too much in them personally, for having met, with too much scorn, the taunts of the unbelievers, and for holding up, to justify ourselves in their eyes, not the Cross of our Redeemer, but our philosophers and our poets; we are punished for having leaned upon those human reeds, melodious as they were, and they have broken in our hand. Henceforth we are taught to look higher for our help; it is not a fragile staff that we need in journeying through the world; it is two wings, the wings that bear the angels—faith and charity. We must make haste to fill the places that have become vacant. Genius has failed us; let us be led by grace; we must be courageous and persevering; we must love unto death; we must fight unto death." . . .

CHAPTER XI.

1837.

OZANAM terminated his legal studies by the usual examination, and with such success that he resolved to go up, as soon as possible, for the degree of Doctor of Law. The bar was now open to him, but he continued undecided as to his real vocation. He could not divest himself of the feeling that in becoming a barrister he was betraying his true calling; that Literature, not Law, was the mistress who claimed his first allegiance, and who would best requite his services. Reason, interest, the wishes of his family, all pleaded in favour of the bar, but he himself was conscious of an insurmountable repugnance to the profession. Might not this be a warning and a presentiment?

"The moment of choosing our destiny is a solemn one, and everything that is solemn is sad," he says to Lallier. "I am suffering from this absence of a vocation which shows me the dust and stones of every road, and the flowers of none. The one to which I am nearest just now, the bar, strikes me as especially uninviting. I have talked it over with several legal men. I have seen what one must be satisfied to put up with in order to get business, and what annoyances, on the other hand, accompany the business. People are fond of saying that barristers are the most independent of men; they are at least as much slaves as the rest, for they have two sets of tyrants equally

insupportable,—the attorneys to begin with, and clients by and by."

Duty to his father, who had made great sacrifices to keep him for five years in Paris, pointed emphatically to the bar, however, as his legitimate career; so Ozanam, conquering all personal antipathies, bravely entered on his duties as a barrister. The briefs were rare, and the few that came were not followed by any brilliant results. Here is his own account of these beginnings :—"Will it interest you to hear something of the kind of life I am leading now? It is always the same odd life, divided between interrupted studies and wearisome occupations. I reckon irreverently amongst the latter the few briefs that take me to the Courts. The famous case of interdiction that was pending when you left has been pleaded twice since then, and will be decided perhaps to-morrow. On two other occasions I distinguished myself at the bar of the Civil Tribunal, and at that of the Police Correctionnelle for some trifling cases. This week the Assizes have given me plenty to do. On Monday a poor devil, who was defended by me, got condemned to five years' hard labour, not so much for the crime in question, which was not proved, as for his antecedents, which were villanous beyond a doubt. The day before yesterday the scene changed; and if your evil genius had conducted you to the great hall of the Hôtel de Ville, you would have beheld your most humble servant by the side of Pitrat, the director of the *Gazette du Lyonnais*, cited for having attacked the King's Government; you would have heard a lengthy harangue from the King's counsel, invoking the utmost rigour of the law against the pitiful little newspaper, and the young advocate endeavouring, according to his laudable custom, to maintain a neutral position between the accuser and the accused, to justify the latter without exasperating the

former; you would have heard a statesman of four-and-twenty delivering judgment, with unblushing audacity, on the highest questions of constitutional law, and on the weightiest contemporaneous facts. I cannot tell whether, in company with almost the entire audience, you would have counted, at the close of the proceedings, on a verdict of acquittal; but I know for a fact that, not being deaf, you would have heard a sentence of condemnation, which, for not being unduly severe, was none the less disappointing to the plaintiff and his counsel. I was very much complimented on my speech; but you know that my poor speechifying has the luck to gain applause much oftener than conviction. Having now led you through the most memorable scenes of the barristerial life I have been leading these few months past, I leave you to guess the rest."

In the month of April Frederic went to Paris on account of his approaching examination for the Doctorship of Letters. He was recalled suddenly by the death of his father. It was no ordinary love that Doctor Ozanam had inspired in his children; they not only revered him as their father, but looked up to him as a model of all the Christian virtues. Frederic was fond of tracing to his parents every moral and intellectual gift he possessed, and this with genuine simplicity. "You did not know him," he says to a friend, to whom he is announcing his loss, "but if ever your indulgence found anything in me worthy of esteem or love, attribute it to my father, to his advice and example." This idea was not the result of present sorrow, it was a conviction which he retained all his life. A month before his death, summing up all the mercies and blessings of his life, he makes the following thanksgiving for his father: "Thou didst preserve his faith, amidst many evil times. Through revolutions, adversities, and in the soldiers' camp his nature remained noble; he maintained

his sense of justice unimpaired, his charity to the poor unwearied. I bear this witness to my father: when I was compelled to the sad duty of looking into his accounts for the settlement of our inheritance, I found that one-third of his visits had been made without remuneration, to the poor recognised as such. He loved science, art, and labour, and he sought to inspire us with the love of the good and the beautiful. When he left the Hussars he had read the Bible of Dom Calmet from one end to the other; he knew Latin as few of us professors know it now-a-days."

Frederic inherited probably from his father his great love for the sacred text. He read the Bible himself in Hebrew ever since he understood that tongue, and his mother was fond of relating a little circumstance in which his knowledge of it once served him rather humorously. Several Protestant clergymen at Lyons were in the habit at one time of coming to hold theological discussions with him; one day one of them kept him four hours at it, the point in dispute being a text which each interpreted differently. At last Frederic exclaimed, "But why should a learned man like you argue from a translation? Let us get the Hebrew version, and fight it out over the original." His antagonist had to admit that he was not a Hebrew scholar, and when Ozanam proceeded to give his direct translation of the text, he refused to accept it, observing that he would consult some higher authority, and then come back to finish the argument. "But," the mother of the young *savan* would add proudly, "he never came back!"

Frederic now devoted all his energies to comforting his mother, and endeavouring to replace the protector who had been taken from her when apparently she most needed him. "Happy the man to whom God has given a holy mother!" he exclaims. "But why is it decreed that in

proportion as the halo of sanctity shines more brightly round that beloved head the shadow of death draws near to it? Why in the languages of men is perfection synonymous with the end? Why does God give us nothing here below, but only lend to us? Oh dear friend, pray with me that my mother may be spared to me; that she may be spared to my brothers, who also have such need of her; that this home which you saw so happy and so full of love may not be laid desolate, filled with mourning, and emptied of all joy, given as a spectacle of human vicissitudes, and made a scandal for the unrighteous, who, seeing how severely Christian families are dealt with, may ask in their insolence, 'Where then is the God in whom they hoped?' *Ubi est Deus eorum?*

"It is in Him that I have placed all my hope, and I am resolved to follow only the indications He gives me in the shifting circumstances of life.

"I continue by letters the steps I was taking in Paris. Meantime, I have not neglected my literary labours; they are always one of my most salutary consolations. I am still busy on Dante."

The steps to which he alludes had reference to a Professorship of Commercial Law, which some influential persons had proposed getting established at Lyons in order that Ozanam should be named to it. The municipal body, amongst whom he had many friends, received the suggestion cordially, and immediately sent up a petition to that effect to the Minister of Public Instruction at Paris. Some time must, however, elapse before the affair could be definitely settled, and pending this Ozanam worked on diligently at his law business. "I have now pleaded twelve times," he says, "three times only before the Civil Tribunal, where I gained my verdict each time. The emotions of pleading are not without their charm, but the emoluments

are slow in making their appearance, and the relations with men of business are so painful, so humiliating, so unjust that I cannot get reconciled to them. Justice is the last moral asylum, the last sanctuary of existing society, and to see it surrounded with dirt is for me a source of indignation which is provoked at every instant. This kind of life irritates me too much; I nearly always come back from Court deeply wounded, for I find it as hard to resign myself to the sight of evil as to its endurance. Yet I am far from entertaining the idea of renouncing a profession which present circumstances render it more than ever essential for me to persevere in. After the holidays I will commence a lesson of law to three young fellows who are *trop grands seigneurs* to go and sit on the benches of the École, and whose fees I shall be very happy to pocket."

The necessity for securing some more definite and satisfactory returns than these chance fees, and those which his occasional briefs brought him, made Ozanam turn his eyes longingly in the direction of the proposed chair of Law, which was being zealously forwarded by his numerous friends both in Paris and at Lyons. He was very sanguine as to the success of these efforts, but tried to maintain himself in a state of placid indifference. "If," he says, "all these negotiations have no other result, they will at any rate have proved to me the affection of my friends; the good wishes of all have helped on the efforts of many. Meantime I remain passive. I feel a sort of religious awe, perhaps superstition, concerning the present uncertainty of my destiny. Having once placed it in the hands of Providence, I fear to meddle with it. It seems to me as though the success or failure of this affair is to decide whether I shall remain in the world, or take leave of it when circumstances shall have set me free. You perceive from this how daring my dreams are, and to what sacred

heights they venture to soar. But in truth I envy the lot of those who devote themselves without reserve to God and to humanity. Again, on the other hand, the question of marriage presents itself frequently to my mind, and never without leaving behind it the most incredible repugnance. I am weaker than many others, and the wanderings of my imagination might easily have carried my heart out of its depth, but somehow I feel that there is a manly virginity which is not devoid of honour and a certain charm, and that we abdicate this to a certain extent in conjugal union. It may be that this feeling arises from an unjust contempt for women. Yet Our Blessed Lady, and my mother, and a few others, make me forgive a great deal to those daughters of Eve. But I declare to you that in general I do not understand them. Their sensibility is sometimes admirable, but their frivolity, the inconsistency of their mind, is hopeless. Can you conceive anything more capricious, more disjointed, than their conversation? And then to think of binding one's-self without reserve and without end to the society of any human creature, mortal, infirm, and wretched, let her be ever so perfect! It is the perpetual nature of the partnership which is to me so full of terror; this is why I never can assist at a marriage without shedding tears, as at an ordination or a taking of the veil. I never could understand the gaiety that one generally sees at weddings. . . . About a week ago a prolonged meditation on my own wretchedness, internal and external, threw my mind into such a state of perturbation that I was reduced to the impossibility of either thinking or acting. My brain was on fire, driven in every sense by the most dreadful thoughts and fancies; at last the excess of the evil compelled me to have recourse to the physician, the physician I mean who has the secret of all human infirmities, as well as the balm of Divine grace. Well, when with an energy which

I seldom display on such occasions, I had laid bare my misery and my distress to the charitable man whom I address as 'father,' what do you think he said to me? He answered me in the words of the apostle: *Gaudete in Domino semper.* You will admit that it was a strange reply. A poor fellow has just had the greatest misfortune which can befall him in the spiritual order, that of offending God; the greatest misfortune which could befall him in the natural order, that of losing his father; he has an aged and infirm mother, whose every movement, every look, every expression he watches from day to day to see how long she is likely to be spared to him; he finds himself detached by absence or by death from many friends who were dear to him; he is, over and above all this, a prey to anxiety about a most precarious future, overpowered with troubles and business of a most disagreeable nature;[1] if he falls back upon himself in order to escape from what is painful without, he finds nothing but imperfections, weakness, and faults, . . . and in the teeth of all this he is told—not to be resigned, to take comfort, but to rejoice—*gaudete semper!* It needs assuredly all the boldness, all the pious insolence of Christianity to hold such language. And yet Christianity is right."

The added dignity of Doctor of Law, which the young barrister had acquired this year, does not seem to have attached him more closely to the profession, which, so far, yielded but slight encouragement; clients continued scarce, and during the following year he made but little head against the difficulties of a beginner.

In a letter where he announces the approaching marriage

[1] The duty of collecting and administering his father's limited means had devolved entirely on Frederic, and brought his sensitive nature in contact with much selfishness and worldly hardness.

of a friend, Frederic observes that, in order to fortify himself against the matrimonial contagion, he set off to visit *la Grande Chartreuse.* "I shall not attempt to tell all I saw; suffice it to say, that I beheld scenery which I have not the talent to describe, and men whom I shall never have the strength to imitate. The impression left by this pilgrimage, however, is very different from what I anticipated. I had heard of nothing but sublime horrors,—torrents, precipices, deserts, frightful austerities; instead of all this, I found a delightful solitude, a magnificent vegetation, rich meadows, forests where the green foliage of the beech intermingled with the gloomy shade of the fir-trees, rocks on which roses flowered, rivulets bounding in elegant cascades over beds of sward and moss, on every side masses of blue campanulas, broad feathery ferns like diminutive palm-trees, flocks and herds on the mountains, birds in the woods; and there in the valley the mighty, majestic monastery; the monks with serene countenances beneath their antique cowl, their features beaming with peace and happiness; chants rising, full and harmonious, at every hour of the day; hymns ascending to Heaven in the silent night-time, when crimes are being multiplied on the earth, and the vengeance of God is provoked; then the lovely chapels of Notre Dame at Casaliban, and of Bruno, with their fountains and their memories of seven hundred years. Perhaps it is a far-fetched fancy of mine, but La Chartreuse, suspended thus in a hollow of the mountain, seems to me like a nest in the desert, where holy souls are gathered together and hatched under the maternal wings of religion, until they have attained their maturity, when they peacefully take flight to heaven.

"Religion, like a mother full of indulgent kindness, as she is, has surrounded this sacred nest with all the harmonies

of nature and all the graces of creation. And it is a fact worthy of remark that hermits and monks of all times, while cutting themselves off from the artificial pleasures of society, and exiling themselves from the tumult and enjoyments of the city, and maltreating their flesh, never denied themselves the delights of the eyes, but chose for their solitude picturesque sites, extensive views, and magnificent landscapes. This remark is verified at every step in Italy, where every other mountain-top is crowned with a monastery. It was the same in our old France long ago. Wherever there was a bold, overhanging mountain, a smiling valley, a forest with sombre shade, the traveller was sure to descry a steeple surmounted by a cross, and to meet traces of the anchorite's sandals on the lonely pathways.

"Nature, in her virginity, is profoundly Christian; she abounds in solemn sadness and ineffable consolations; she speaks but of death and resurrection, of past faults and future glorifications. Mountains especially have a voice which appeals to the soul, of which they are in a certain sense the image,—riches and nakedness, immeasurable height and fathomless abysses, immense disorder, traces of bygone convulsions, soaring peaks, efforts to reach the skies, ever powerless, ever renewed! Is not all this a symbol of our life here below? Mountains, with their variety, resemble human nature, as the ocean, in its immensity, resembles the Divine nature. So it is that the globe, which we tread under our feet, is a tablet on which are written, in indelible characters, the lessons of a sublime philosophy, and this philosophy is none other than that which is written in letters no less indelible in the pages of the gospel."

To some who knew Frederic from his childhood, and witnessed his piety, and his enthusiasm for the silent,

heroic life of the cloister, it was rather a surprise that he manifested no signs of a vocation in that direction; but this sympathy was, in truth, more ideal than practical. Pure as his heart was, and sustained as was the flight of his soul in those bright and lofty regions, there was in his nature a chord of human tenderness which had hitherto remained silent, and only now, for the first time, began to warn him of its presence by certain faint vibrations which he confides to a friend, who has written to inform him of his intended marriage :—

"Love has this in common with the divine nature, that it gives without impoverishing itself, that it communicates itself without growing less, that it multiplies itself, is present in many places at the same time, and that its intensity augments in proportion as it expands. In your wife you will love first God, whose precious and admirable work she is, and then humanity, that race of Adam of whom she is the pure and gentle daughter; her tenderness will be your consolation in days of sorrow, and you will draw courage from her example in moments of peril; you will be her guardian angel, and she will be yours. Henceforth you will know no more faintheartedness, no more discouragement, nor any of those vain terrors which are apt to seize upon us at certain moments of our lives; for you will no longer be alone; you will never again be alone; the union you are about to contract will be immortal; what God has once united He will not part; He will surround with one glory in heaven those whom He made companions here below in the same exile.

"But I am stammering in a language which I do not know, and talking of things which have not been revealed to me. With me, imagination was developed early, but sensibility much later. Although I am at what is called the age of the passions, I have as yet scarcely felt their

first approach. My poor head has had to suffer a good deal, but my heart has as yet known no affections but those of kindred and friendship. And yet it seems to me, for some time past, that I am conscious of symptoms that are the foreshadowing of a new order of sentiment, and I am frightened at it. I feel a void growing within me which neither friendship nor study can fill. I know not who is destined to fill it. Will it be God, or will it be a creature? If it is to be a creature, I pray that she may present herself as late as possible, when I shall have become worthy of her. I pray that she may bring with her just enough of external charms to leave no room for regret; but, above all, I pray that she may be endowed with an excellent soul, with great virtues; that she may be infinitely better than I am; that she may lead me upwards, and never let me descend; that she may be courageous, because I am often pusillanimous; that she may be fervent, because I am lukewarm in the things of God; and, lastly, that she may be compassionate, so that I may not have to blush before her on account of my inferiority. Such are my dreams, but, as I have said, nothing is more impenetrable to me than my own future."

Ozanam began now to realise the difficulty for him, amounting to impossibility, of combining the profession of the bar with the pursuit of literature, as he understood it.

". . . Once upon a time," he says, "I used to flatter myself that my life might be divided in equal portions between action and study, one-half given up to the tumult of business, the other devoted to the peaceful cultivation of letters; but now I find myself fatally impelled to the painful alternative of abandoning one or other of these careers, which I had fondly hoped to combine. My poor head is not big enough to hold one train of thought without turning out all rivals. Literature can never be a relaxation for me. You have seen with your own eyes

what it costs me to write; and yet, whether from self-love, or some other better motive, I cannot bring myself to bid a final farewell to that severe mistress who makes me pay so dearly for her intercourse. On the other hand, I feel that if I had devoted exclusively to the study of law all the faculties God has given me during the five years' sojourn in Paris, I might have attained to a position at the bar at which I can now never hope to arrive."

While suffering from this uncertainty and agitation, Ozanam was always ready to combat in others a like sense of depression and discouragement. "Yes," he says to a fellow-student, who was hesitating at that point where the roads of life diverge—"yes, we are useless servants, but we are servants, and the wages are given only on condition that we do the work in the vineyard of the Lord in that precise place that is assigned to us. Yes, life is contemptible, if we consider the use we make of it; but not if we calculate the use we may make of it if we look upon it as the most perfect work of the Creator—the sacred garment with which the Divine humanity clothed Himself. Oh! then life is beautiful, and worthy of all reverence and love. Let us pray for one another, my dear friend; let us mistrust our mistrust, our *ennuis*, and our sadness. Let us follow with simplicity the lead of our merciful Providence, satisfied just to see the stone on which we place our foot at each successive step, and without trying to discover the whole length of the road, nor its turns and windings."

His own cares and anxieties left abundant room in his thoughts for those of others. He had taken great interest in the proposed journey of a young artist companion, M. Janmot, to Italy, and, after giving him all the hints he could beforehand as to the best way of profiting to the full by his opportunity, he goes over the ground in imagination with him on the traveller's return.

". . . I assume that when this letter reaches you it will find you still under the impression of the delightful journey you have just made through Umbria. If I am not mistaken, it is one of the most beautiful countries of beautiful Italy; the majesty of great mountains crowning fair and smiling valleys; contrasting climates ranged as in an amphitheatre to make room for all the riches of vegetation from the pine and the oak to the orange-tree and the aloe; cities planted or suspended here and there in the most imposing attitudes, and every city, every hill, every rivulet, every stone abounding in memories: Spoleto, whose humble gates remained closed against Hannibal, while Capua's fell back at the first sound of his footsteps; the lake of Trasimena, where two giant peoples fought with such fell fury that, while the fight raged, an earthquake destroyed whole towns without its being felt; Orvieto and its Etruscan antiquities, the inheritance of a civilisation that passed away and left no history behind it; the lonely lake of Bolsena, and the island where a queen died of hunger. And then the Christian traditions that have purified and embalmed all these places! Here we have the miracle of Bolsena immortalised by Raphael; there the marvellous legend of St. Margaret of Cortona; but beyond and above all floats the great memory of St. Francis. I don't remember whether it is at Foligno that they show you the rose-tree on whose thorns he lay an entire night, and which ever since remains laden with flowers perpetually renewed. It was on Monte Alverno that the glorious stigmata were imprinted on his hands and feet. It was along the roads through which you passed that he used to go calling to the little birds to come and sing the praises of God, it was there that he gave his cloak in exchange for the lamb which the butchers were leading to the slaughter. But it is, above all, Assisi that is full of him; Assisi and its cloister, that contained formerly six thousand monks, and

its two churches, symbol of the twofold life of the saint, one terrestrial and mysterious, the other immortal and resplendent,—its two churches, where the inspired painting of the middle ages unfolds itself from its cradle to its maturity, from Cimabue and Giotto to the days of Perugino and his disciple. . . . And we, my dear friend, shall we do nothing to resemble those saints whom we love? shall we remain satisfied with mourning over the sterility of the present, while we each one of us carry in our hearts a form of sanctity which would blossom forth at the mere bidding of our will? . . . If, in the Middle Ages, a diseased society could only be cured by the immense effusion of love which was poured upon it especially by St. Francis of Assisi; if later on new sufferings called for the healing hands of St. Philip Neri, St. John of God, and St. Vincent de Paul, how much greater need have we now of charity, of self-devotion, of patience, to cure the sufferings of the nations! . . . The question which divides men in our day is no longer a question of political forms, it is a social question, that of deciding whether the spirit of egotism or the spirit of sacrifice is to carry the day; whether society is to be a huge traffic for the benefit of the strongest, or the consecration of each for the benefit of all, and above all for the protection of the weak. There are many who have already too much, and who wish to possess still more; there are a greater number who have not enough, and who want to seize it if it is not given to them. Between these two classes of men a struggle is imminent, and it threatens to be terrible—on one side the power of gold, on the other the power of despair. It is between these two opposing armies that we must precipitate ourselves, if not to prevent, at least to break the shock. Our youth and the mediocrity of our position makes easy this *rôle* of mediatorship which our title of Christians renders obligatory."

CHAPTER XII.

1838-9.

TOWARDS the close of 1838 Ozanam went up for his degree of Doctor of Letters. His Latin thesis was on the descent of the heroes into hell, a study from the ancient poets. Dante was the subject of the French one. The success of the first was marked, but that of the latter surpassed the highest hopes of his most admiring friends. It was more than a success, it was a revelation. Frenchmen had hitherto known the great Florentine poet almost exclusively as the singer of Francesca di Rimini's woes, and of the ghastly tragedy of the Hunger Tower; they had not discovered that he was a theologian as well as a poet, and that his influence had been as fertile and enduring on the religious feeling of his countrymen as upon their art. Ozanam had studied the character and the genius of Dante until he had come to love him with something of religious enthusiasm. In revealing the unsuspected beauties of the pathetic, mysterious figure, he rose to heights of inspiration which it is seldom given to human eloquence to reach, and never except when it is the inspired messenger of the soul. He evoked the spirit of the dead poet, and bid the living look upon him. As at the voice of a magician, the clouds rolled away, and the luminous figure stood revealed against the background of the thirteenth century, crowned with its triple halo of exile, poet, and theologian. The audience, spellbound with admiration, listened in breathless silence.

M. Cousin, one of the examiners, and a qualified judge of eloquence, bore it while he could; but at last, like one beside himself, he cried out, "Ozanam, how is it possible to be so eloquent?" Tears flowed on every side, and choked applause, until the orator, himself overcome with emotion, descended from that tribune which he had conquered as the pedestal of his future glory; then the entire hall rose with an irrepressible shout. This thesis, so long and laboriously prepared, was the kernel of a volume which Ozanam published later, under the title of *Dante et la Philosophie Catholique au Treizième Siècle.*

The affair of the Chaire de Droit was still undecided, and continued to drag on in endless preliminaries and negotiations.

His mother's rapidly declining health increased his anxiety to obtain the appointment. "I am witnessing the saddest of all spectacles," he writes to Lallier, "the failing of my poor mother's strength; in proportion as her sight steadily decays, her moral energy gives way; her sensibility seems to increase with our anxieties."

His inability to remove from his mother's mind this poignant anxiety concerning the future of her younger sons, and surrounding her last days with peace and comfort, was a constant thorn in his heart. "After all the sacrifices my dear father made for my education," he says, "I ought to be able to replace him now, and to be the support of my family; I am, on the contrary, only an additional burden. A lesson in law which I give every day is the most stable part of my income; my clients leave me large leisure. With the exception of two cases at the Assizes, which made a good deal of noise, and very little money, and two law-suits which I conciliated, one that I pleaded before the Tribunal of Commerce last week, a memorial which I drew up in a dispute between two

tradesmen, a certain number of consultations gratis, I have had nothing to do for the last five months in this worthy profession of the bar, one of those at the end of which a man is surest of making a fortune provided he does not die of hunger at the beginning; and yet—must I confess it? —these small items of business are still repugnant to me. I cannot get acclimatised in the atmosphere of chicanery; discussions that turn solely on pecuniary interests are painful to me. There never was a case so good but that there are wrongs on both sides; and let a defence be ever so legal, one has always some weak point to dissemble. There are habits of hyperbole and reticence which the most respectable members of the bar practise, and which one must submit to; all the figures of rhetoric are reduced into action before the tribunals which recognise no other language. It is understood that you are to claim two hundred francs damages when you only want fifty; that your client is infallibly right in everything he alleges, and that his adversary is a scoundrel. Venture to express yourself in more reasonable terms, and you are set down as having given in, made concessions, confessed yourself conquered; your colleagues reproach you; your client cries out that he is betrayed; and if you happen to meet in society one of the judges who presided in the case, he accosts you with, 'My dear fellow, you are too timid!'"

Ozanam's leisure at the bar left him plenty of time for literary work, and he employed it in enlarging his thesis on Dante, which had grown imperceptibly to the dimensions of a volume, and which he finished in the month of May, and sent on to Paris for publication.

At last the long delays came to an end, and on the 21st of February 1839 he announces his official appointment:—"The Municipal Council, by a majority of twenty-eight votes out of thirty-six, has named me Professor of

Commercial Law. This nomination has yet to be confirmed by the Minister of Public Instruction. I have therefore written to M. Cousin to say that, while gratefully thanking him for the offer of the Chair of Philosophy at Orleans, I was moved by a sense of duty to my family to choose the Chair of Law at Lyons."

M. Cousin, who was well acquainted with Ozanam, judged rightly that Philosophy was a fitter sphere for him than Law, and, pending the ultimate decision of the municipality, he had written to his young friend offering him the Philosophical professorship at Orleans. The offer was tempting, and it was not without a struggle that Ozanam declined it. "Tell me what you think of my choice," he says to Lallier, "and what my friends in Paris think of it. Here I have been almost blamed for it. Most people were of opinion that my true interests were on the banks of the Loire. For myself, I confess that I was attracted by the prospect of an exclusively intellectual career, an existence which henceforward would have been irrevocably fixed, and consequently peaceful; the neighbourhood of Paris also drew me; but, as a set-off against this, there was the total isolation in a strange town, the necessity of leaving my mother for six months of the year, with the risk of receiving some day a letter like that of the 12th of May 1837.[1] . . . There is some talk of founding a *School* of Law in these parts; and if so, the municipal Professor would stand a fair chance of getting a chair there; that is to say, an honourable position *for life*, with the right of enlarging the sphere of his lectures as much as he liked. If God gives me life and strength, and settles me by a definite vocation in these quiet functions, I should like to bring my personal labours into harmony with my public duties by writing a book on the Philosophy and the History of Law,

[1] Announcing his father's accident.

treated from the Christian point of view; this, it seems to me, would fill up a great void in science."

His nomination to the Municipal Chair was settled finally in the month of July. M. Cousin writes himself to announce it:—

"MY DEAR OZANAM,—I did not write to you so long as I had nothing positive to tell you. Now I come to announce to you that in the Council of yesterday it was settled that you were to be named to the Chair of Commercial Law.

"I would much rather have seen you in my own regiment, but I don't despair of it yet, and in any case I am satisfied that with me, or without me, you will always love and serve true philosophy.

"Don't quite forget me, for you are always sure to find in me a friend."

These personal matters did not make him relax his active interest in the progress of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

"Our little Society," he writes to Lallier, "has become sufficiently important to be regarded in the light of a providential fact. See that you are present as often as possible at the particular meetings; call on the presidents from time to time; take an interest in the meetings of the board of direction. . . . I fully approve of your idea of speaking in a forthcoming letter of the exterior spirit of the Society, the absence of secrecy, and the necessity for remaining in the background. It would perhaps be well to lay down this principle, that humility is obligatory for associations quite as much as for individuals, and you might illustrate it by the example of St. Vincent de Paul, who severely reprimanded a priest of the mission for speaking of the Society as 'our holy society.' *Servi inutiles sumus*

is the testimony which those who serve God and their fellow-men should bear to themselves. It would then be well to dwell a little on the nature of humility, and to show how it should exclude all collective pride, which disguises itself so often under the name of love of a community, and those imprudent displays before strangers under pretext of edification or proselytism. On the other hand, one might mention that silence is not the inevitable form of true humility, but may sometimes be even contrary to it, for people are only silent concerning what they believe to be important, and they compensate themselves amongst each other for the admiration they cannot claim from without. Thus, *not to show ourselves, but to let ourselves be seen,* might be our formula, and it is pretty much the one that we find amidst the maxims of a great apostle of charity, St. Francis de Sales. We have had ample opportunity here of practising this doctrine, surrounded as we have been by two kinds of dangers. On one hand, the rivalry of some other pious confraternities, and on the other the too expansive zeal of certain members who went about praising our little work; the exaggeration of the reports made us appear suspicious in the eyes of the former, and ridiculous in those of others. It was prophesied to us that publicity would be our death; but, thank God, the prophets of evil have proved false ones; we kept ourselves lowly, people pitied us and allowed us to live.

"I will tell you, in a letter addressed to M. Bailly, about another work which we have undertaken without prejudice to this one, and which it would be desirable to see established wherever there is a conference; that is, the propagation of Christian instruction amongst the soldiers of the garrisons; here we have got up a library and a school for reading, writing, aud arithmetic for the soldiers, and already the results are consoling."

It was not, however, to be expected that a work of such growing importance as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul should attain its maturity without making enemies and encountering opposition.

"It is impossible to blind ourselves to the fact," says Ozanam; "the Society has everywhere met with mistrust. If at Lyons it has escaped the censure of the ecclesiastical authorities, if even a few venerable priests have encouraged it, it has never ceased to be the object of vexations on the part of seculars, the big-wigs of orthodoxy, fathers of the council in dress-coats and strapped pantaloons, doctors who lay down the law between the morning's newspaper and their business accounts; persons to whom whatever is new is unwelcome, and by whom everything emanating from Paris is assumed to be wicked, whose personal opinion on politics is a thirteenth article of the creed to them, who appropriate works of charity as their own belongings, and declare modestly, putting themselves in the place of our Lord, 'Whosoever is not with me is against me.' You would hardly believe the tricks, the cavilling, the insults, the meannesses we had to bear from these people, who are all in perfectly good faith. The most estimable have been carried away by the general feeling, and we had a great deal to suffer even from those who love us. But why should we complain when we have to do with a generation which anathematises M. Lacordaire, declares M. de Ravignan unintelligible, and the Abbé Cœur a man to be suspected! Chaurand and I, as chief founders and promoters of the work, have been continually in the breach, and find it a very wearisome post; one's spirit must imbibe a certain bitterness, charity must more or less suffer in the conversations that one is forced to have on this subject. On the other hand, there is a heavy responsibility attached to our office, humble as it is, for the faults one commits are

doubly serious when they fall back on the work one is directing. The heads of pious associations ought to be saints in order to draw down upon them the blessing of God. I often ask myself how I dare, I so bad and so weak, remain the representative of so many excellent young men. This is why I long for the moment when it will be possible for me to resign the presidentship.

"We are reading at present at our meetings the Life of St. Vincent de Paul, in order better to penetrate ourselves with his maxims and traditions. A patron saint should not be a signboard to a society, like a St. Denis or St. Nicholas over the door of a tavern. It is a type that we should strive to realise, as he himself realised the Divine type, which is Jesus Christ. It is a life that we must continue, a heart where we must seek to warm our hearts, an intelligence to which we must come for light; it is a model for us on earth, and a protector in heaven; we owe him consequently the twofold homage of imitation and invocation. It is only on this condition of appropriating the thoughts and virtues of the saint that the Society can escape from the personal imperfections of its members, and, by rendering itself useful to the Church, justify its existence."

In drawing up the rules of the confraternity no provision had been made for prayers and other charitable offices in behalf of those who might be called away. It was not long, however, before this oversight, natural enough in the young, met with a sad and stern rebuke in the death of some of the youngest of the little brotherhood.

Ozanam was the first to think of repairing the omission, and suggested that every year, on the first Monday of Lent, a Requiem mass should be celebrated for the deceased members, all the associates assisting, that by this means they

might still maintain unbroken the bonds of charity which had united them on earth.

He attached great importance to a correspondence, being regularly kept up between the various conferences and gently upbraids Lallier, who was in Paris, for growing remiss in this respect. These sort of epistles were heard with attention, and often bore good practical fruits. "You are therefore earnestly entreated to resume a correspondence which had about it something of the apostolic times, and which you have, I suspect, suspended, simply because of that too great modesty, against which I wage war so pitilessly." "You can form no idea," he urges elsewhere, "of the magic there is in words that come from a distance. Your letter has revived the ardour of the work among the soldiers, which was beginning to languish. The links that bind us to the Society of Paris are like those which united those celebrated twins whose separation caused their death; life and blood circulate interiorly."

He believed much in this power of association for good, and referred to it continually as the most effectual counterpoise to the fatal strength of union amongst the wicked.

"Alas!" he exclaims, "we see the division which exists in society growing deeper and wider every day. It is not political opinions that divide men; it is something less than opinions; it is their interests that sunder them. Here is the camp of the rich, there the camp of the poor. One only means of salvation remains to us, that is, that Christians, in the name of love, interpose between the two camps, passing like beneficent deserters from one to the other, collecting abundant alms from the rich, and resignation from the poor; carrying gifts to the poor, and words of gratitude to the rich; teaching them on both sides to look upon each other as brothers; and communicating mutual charity to all, until this charity, paralysing and

stifling the egotism of both parties, and every day lessening their antipathies, shall bid the two camps arise and break down the barriers of prejudice, and cast aside their weapons of anger, and march forth to meet each other—not to fight, but to mingle together in one embrace, so that they may henceforth form but one fold under one pastor: *unum ovile, unus pastor.*"

His faith in the power of friendship was indeed as strong as his personal delight in it was boundless. "Friendships," he says, "formed under the auspices of faith, in a double confraternity of religious discussions and charitable deeds, far from growing cold by absence, draw closer, and become as it were more concentrated. They live in memory, and memory beautifies all things, idealises all realities, purifies every image, and retains the pleasant far more vividly than the painful ones."

CHAPTER XIII.

1839.

THE position which Ozanam had waited for so long and anxiously did not bring him the peace of mind he had expected. His chief motive in coveting it was the power it would give him of surrounding his mother's declining years with greater comforts; and this privilege, now that he had gained it, seemed likely to be of short duration. Madame Ozanam's health had reached that point when all that could be hoped for was, that the end, which was swiftly drawing near, might be peaceful, and free from unendurable suffering.

As regarded Frederic himself, he had confidently looked to his nomination as to an event which would set at rest for ever all doubts as to his vocation, believing that henceforth he would feel perfectly reassured as to his appointed work. Here, too, he was deceived, this disappointment being indeed a natural consequence of the former one. Since his mother's death was likely to set him free so soon, and to remove all necessity for his continuing in a worldly career, had he done wisely in trammelling himself with fresh responsibilities and ties? Might he not have thereby set up a barrier between him and his true vocation—the priesthood? There was nothing, except his present duty to his mother, to indicate that he was not called to the sacerdotal life, and there were many inward voices, attractions, aptitudes, antipathies, which whispered to him some-

times loudly, sometimes more faintly, that he was. His ardent desire to serve the cause of truth, to do something for God and humanity, to lead a life of self-forgetfulness, labour, and sacrifice, was as strong as ever, while his repugnance to marriage continued insurmountable. A letter written to a friend who consulted him on the subject of his own intended marriage gives a clear idea of what his views were at this period. He was now six-and-twenty years of age :—

". . . I am greatly touched by your confidence. There is no more severe trial than this uncertainty concerning a question on which one's whole life depends, and in these circumstances the full and complete acceptance of the Divine will must be most meritorious. You are too deeply imbued with this belief for your decision, whatever way it may be, not to turn out for your happiness and your salvation. But I cling to the hope of seeing you preserve your liberty a little longer; of seeing you wait a little before contracting new duties which would enchain you completely and leave you no time for study or for action. The solitary life you are leading just now is no doubt sad and dreary; but work can fill it up, and religion can console it. God and science, charity and study, are not these enough to charm your youth? And then, if I may say out all I think, is virginity a virtue fit only for the daughters of Eve? Was it not, on the contrary, one of the principal glories of our Redeemer? Was not this what He cherished above all in His beloved disciple? Is it not the fairest flower that is cultivated in the garden of the Church? Do you feel no regret in letting it wither before the hour of noon? Would you not be glad to take it with you to heaven were you called away during those perilous years which precede perfect maturity? Does not the day after a marriage always bring you a kind of pang? Believe me,

a man abdicates a great part of his dignity the day that he chains himself to a woman's arm. Read over St. Paul. Do not imagine from this that I am an advocate for eternal and universal celibacy. Heaven forbid! But I should like men to postpone marriage to the time when it has become necessary, and therefore ceases to be fatal; to the period when the mind has reached its development, when the will has acquired all its energy, and when one is committed by one's work, one's engagements, one's antecedents of any sort, so as no longer to be able to disengage one's-self; until one has gained some right to the joys of domestic life, by work and solitude; when one has something to offer, and not everything to receive; to that period, in a word, when a man is sure of being his own master, and free externally.

"You speak of the sweets of family life; but, my dear friend, is it quite opportune, this material or sentimental well-being, this twofold egotism? Is society so happy, is religion so honoured, is our Christian youth so numerous and so active, are the few who can work for the general good so full of leisure as that you, to whom God has given such ability, who are surrounded by acquaintances and encouragements, and who are conscious of an inner voice calling you to work, should feel justified in withdrawing from the field like a tired labourer who has borne the heat and burden of the day? Were you not in earnest, after all, in what you have said and done and written, and in what your friends have repeated and striven for with you? Do you despair of the regeneration of the country, and the amendment of ideas? Or is it that you despair of yourself, that is to say, of God, who created, redeemed, and sanctified you? You say, forsooth, that it is so hard to find out your post here below! May we not all say the same thing? And is this a reason for committing suicide?

and is it not suicide for you, being what you are, to go off to X., to sow turnips?

"I entreat you, go and see Montalembert, or rather ask him where he is to be found. I have reason to think that he could suggest to you many projects capable of occupying your mind, and diverting you from your present intellectual idleness."

This period, which outwardly seemed one of calm and definite appointment, was in reality the most agitated of Ozanam's life. The municipality of Lyons had just created a professorship expressly for him, and he was pursued on all sides by the most seductive offers. M. Cousin did not disguise his hope of ultimately luring him into "his regiment," as he called the school of philosophy; the leaders of the Catholic party were appealing to him for articles in the various periodicals and newspapers; M. de Montalembert, who was just then founding one, writes to him, "I implore of you, give us a few fragments of your work, a few splinters of the monument that you are chiselling; I ask this service as of a friend and brother-in-arms, on whose sympathy I can count, as you must always count on mine."

If these encouraging invitations had come a year sooner Ozanam would have hailed them with gratitude and delight; but with the threat of his mother's death before his eyes, and his own consequent emancipation from the duties which bound him to his present career, they were only a source of pain and perplexity.

He had watched with intense interest the Abbé Lacordaire's scheme for the re-introduction of the illustrious order of St. Dominic into France, which was now on the eve of its accomplishment. Affection for Lacordaire himself, admiration for his genius and holiness, and, at the same time, a sort of personal pride in him as a Catholic and a

brother-in-arms, all tended to draw Ozanam's sympathies strongly in the direction of the order which had once shed such lustre on the Church of France. No doubt Lacordaire saw this, and it was natural that he should endeavour to follow up the advantage. There is no power so terrible on the battle-field as a virgin heart; it was this that made trained warriors tremble before the frail Maid of Orleans, and the poet expressed one of the deepest truths of Christian life when he sang of King Arthur's blameless knights, "Their strength was as the strength of ten, because their hearts were pure." No one understood this truth better than Lacordaire, and it is not to be wondered that he should have been lovingly and longingly bent upon the conquest of Ozanam's strong, pure heart, and that, when the grave had closed over his friend, he should have alluded to his failure in capturing the prize with a sense of disappointment, mingled with a tenderly implied, though unmerited, reproach.

"On Thursday the 7th of March (1839)—feast of St. Thomas Aquinas—we leave Paris," he wrote to Ozanam; "we shall be at Lyons on the 10th, and on the 12th we embark for Milan. I shall be so delighted to see you and all our friends, and I expect that you will help us to perform the pilgrimage which no good Catholic omits at Lyons."

Ozanam prepared a welcome for his illustrious friend by convoking the various conferences of St. Vincent de Paul to meet him, and hear once more that eloquent voice which had so endeared itself to the Catholic youth of France. It was a solemn and tender meeting. Lacordaire himself was deeply moved, and his emotion inspired him with one of those sudden, soul-stirring bursts of eloquence which a large gathering of souls seldom failed to call forth from him. He spoke with great simplicity; he told them

the story of his present mission, the long efforts that had preceded its approaching fulfilment; he explained, with the familiarity of a brother speaking to brothers, the aim and object of his work, which had been so often misunderstood and falsely interpreted; he told them all about St. Dominic and the special apostolate of the Preaching Friars, whose rule he was going to embrace; he dwelt much on the necessity of recalling religious orders to France, and concluded by speaking in terms of the warmest affection of the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and asking them to pray for him and his two companions. These young men, it was said, had been drawn from the dark haunts of the Carbonari by Lacordaire's siren voice. Everything conduced to render the scene impressive; the numerous assembly of young men, whose faith was in enthusiastic sympathy with that of the young priest going forth from their midst, sacrificing a career already illuminated with the purest glory, in order to devote himself to a life of austere labour, of poverty and suffering, voluntarily chosen. It was a spectacle calculated to move, by a sudden and irresistible impulse, the whole course of a life in those who witnessed it. There were many present who never afterwards lost the impression of that hour, and there were few dry eyes in the assembly when the Abbé Lacordaire and his two fellow-pilgrims passed out of it.

It will readily be imagined that Ozanam was not one of the most indifferent amongst the spectators.

Soon after his arrival in Rome, Père Lacordaire wrote to him, giving an account of his journey, his arrival at the Dominican convent, the affectionate welcome he and his companions had met with from their Italian brethren, and his own reception into the order,—a pleasant, friendly letter, full of spontaneous information about

himself and his happiness in his new vocation, but not containing an allusion, direct or indirect, to the possibility of this vocation being shared by his correspondent. If the reticence was calculated with a view to eliciting responsive confidence, the strategy succeeded perfectly, as the following extract from Ozanam's reply proves :—

"LYONS, *August* 26, 1839.

". . . When your letter from La Quercia came to inform me of the happy termination of your pilgrimage, the welcome given you by the family of St. Dominic, and the souvenir which, in the midst of so many absorbing interests, you retained of the members of St. Vincent de Paul, I hesitated long between the desire to express to you my gratitude for this unexpected honour, and my fear of intruding inopportunely upon the laborious solitude of your novitiate. But, in a recent journey to Paris, I learned that your friends had not given up corresponding with you; and since you condescend to give me this title, I feel at liberty to avail myself of its privileges. It is so short a time since you left the great capital yourself, that the impressions of a traveller of yesterday can be of little interest to you. There is no need to tell you, what you know already so well, that the movement to which you gave such a powerful impulse from the pulpit of Notre Dame has not ceased to spread amongst the intelligent classes. I have seen with my own eyes republican Carbonari changed into humble believers, young artists with fiery passions asking for the rules of the Confraternity. I recognised the disorganisation, the discredit of the rationalistic school, which has rendered it powerless, and compelled its two principal organs, the *Revue Française* and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, to beg for the collaboration of Catholics, or, as M. de Buloz says, of *honnêtes gens*. Mean-

time M. de Montalembert has succeeded in forming, in the Chamber of Peers, a phalanx ready to fight for the good cause; and M. de Carné affirms that in the Chamber of Deputies fifty votes will soon be forthcoming in favour of the religious questions; on the other hand, the little Society of St. Vincent de Paul sees its ranks growing with astonishing rapidity. A new conference has been formed of students from the École Normale and the Polytechnique; fifteen young men, forming about a third of the seminary of the University, have asked as a favour to spend two hours every Sunday, their only day of liberty, in working for God and the poor. Next year Paris will count fourteen conferences, and we shall have a like number in the provinces; all this represents a total of more than one thousand Catholics impatient to join in the intellectual crusade which you will preach. . . .

"Meantime I, the humble witness of those things so full of hope, am now probably settled for some time to come in a position which I had long desired, that of Professor of Commercial Law. I am thankful for a post which fixes me near my mother, now old and infirm, and which does not at the same time tear me from my taste—unlucky no doubt, but incurable—for literary and philosophical work. . . . I feel just at present more than ever the need of a spiritual direction, which would supplement my weakness and deliver me from my own responsibility. To speak quite openly, I have felt more than once, in presence of the illness of my mother, which is making such fearful progress, and when the possibility of that awful loss has come upon me, that there is no reason why I should retain a position which filial duty alone led me to seek; and then uncertainty as to my vocation comes back with greater anxiety than ever. I commend to your charitable prayers this interior trial, from which I have long suffered; for, if

God deigned to call me to His service, there is no army in which I would more gladly serve than that in which you are enrolled. I should even be glad to know something of its conditions beforehand, so that, with the help of my confessor, I might come to some determination. The Rule of the Preaching Friars does not figure in our library; can you tell me where it is to be found? You would thereby add one more obligation to the many which I already owe you."

Père Lacordaire did not leave this letter long unanswered. After touching on the manifestations of a change in public feeling, which Ozanam alluded to in his opening lines, he goes on to say:—". . . We shall see greater things than these. Do we not already see Don Carlos driven out of Spain, and the Revolution mistress of the country, until such time as the wind of the Lord shall arise over Spain, as well as over France? The Revolution, as Mirabeau said, will go the round of the world, but with the Catholic Church behind it. You must know, my dear friend—for, in truth, I entertain this feeling towards you—you must know that in a book which was printed at the beginning of the seventeenth century, if not earlier, and which treats of the life of a certain Madame d'Escobar, it is said that she had a vision where she beheld, at the same time, *England being converted while Spain was being perverted.* It was the same saint who foretold that one day the orders of St. Dominic and St. Ignatius would be perfectly reconciled and united.

"I saw in the *Univers*, which we take in, that your Dante has been reprinted; I am glad of it. You must on no account lay aside your pen. Writing is a hard trade, no doubt, but the press has become too powerful for us to desert our post there. Let us write, not for glory,

not for immortality, but for Jesus Christ. Let us crucify ourselves to our pen. If nobody should read us in a hundred years hence, what does that signify? The drop of water that falls into the sea has gone to swell the flood, and the flood never dies. '*He who has been of his time*,' says Schiller, '*has been of all time.*' He has done his work, he has had his share in the creation of things which are eternal. How many books there are now forgotten on the shelves of our libraries, that contributed three hundred years ago to bring about the revolution which we are witnessing! Our fathers themselves are unknown to us, but we live by them. Moreover, nothing that you have written should dishearten your pen. You have a nervous, brilliant style, and solid erudition. I advise you strongly to go on working, and if I were the director of your conscience, I would lay it on you as an obligation.

"The close of your letter, where you tell me of the persevering instincts that impel you to the service of God, touch me deeply. The hope of seeing you some day one of ours is dear to me. I don't know where you could find our Rule. A Paris publisher ought to be able to procure it for you. But even then I doubt whether you would be able to disentangle clearly the mechanism of our order. I think a few words would explain it to you more satisfactorily. The end is *preaching* and the *Divine science;* the means are *prayer*, *mortification of the senses*, and *study.* The prayer consists in psalmody, or rather the recital of the Canonical Office, which takes us about two hours and a half every day. We only sing Compline, except on great feast-days, when we sing Tierce and Vespers also. The mortification consists in *perpetual abstinence*, with *fasting every Friday, and from the 14th of September to Easter.* But this mortification being only a means to an end, the Superior can dispense from it when necessary. So also with

the woollen shirt, from which one can be dispensed in case of its causing serious suffering. We have no extraordinary penance; and no one need practise any, except they feel the want of it, and then with the advice of his director. We have eight or nine hours a day for study, and we may be exempted from choir in certain cases, which increases this time. The real novices, that is, those who enter the order from eighteen to twenty, study for ten years, are lodged separately, and only enjoy the liberty of the fathers when they have reached the priesthood, even before they have completed their studies. We rise at five, and we go to bed between nine and ten. As to the Government, it is elective, and admirably free. Faults against the rule involve no sin, unless they be accompanied by *contempt of the rule*, or else, what is very rare, there has been a precept *in virtute obedientiæ*. Faults are punished by prostrations on the ground; formerly, when they were grave, they were liable to be punished by the discipline on the naked shoulders in full chapter. The decline of the monastic spirit has almost entirely done away with this custom.

"These few words, my dear friend, will tell you as much about our life as it is possible to know without having practised it. A week passed with us, when we shall have a novitiate, will put you *au courant* better than ten volumes.

"As regards myself, I am very happy; I have nothing to regret here, except the want of a certain severity,[1] which is necessary to us Frenchmen. When we become monks, it is with the intention of being so up to our eyes. Here all is grave, spiritual, mortified even, useful, but one feels that one is in a country where calm reigns, at least on the surface."

The event which Ozanam had been dreading for more

[1] Père Lacordaire subsequently succeeded in establishing the Dominican rule in France in its primitive severity.

than a year came to pass one month after the date of this letter. It was sudden at the last. On Christmas eve he thus describes the closing scene in a letter to Lallier:—

". . . Alas! what havoc this death has made in my mind as well as in my heart! No, I am wrong; what so crushed me was the long illness that I beheld day by day destroying her, and which—shall I say it?—seemed as if it were going to dishonour the sacrifice before consuming it, by quenching the intellectual faculties and blunting the moral feelings; this thought was horrible, and haunted me constantly; I seemed to see her soul dying with her body! Mercifully the trial was shortened; just at the end the energy of her soul revived, and Christ, in descending into the heart of His beloved servant, left there strength for the supreme struggle. She remained for three days calm, serene, murmuring prayers, or acknowledging our caresses and services by a few words of ineffable sweetness. At last the fatal night came; it was I who was watching; I suggested to my dear mother the acts of faith, hope, and charity, the same that she had taught me to lisp after her as a little child; towards one o'clock new symptoms showed themselves and frightened me. I called my elder brother, who was resting in the next room. Charles heard us and got up; the servants hurried in. We knelt round the bed; Alphonse said aloud those heart-rending prayers to which we answered with sobs. All the succours which religion reserves for this solemn hour—absolution, indulgences—were once more applied. The memory of an immaculate life, of good works, which, too numerous and too fatiguing, had hastened its end; three sons preserved in the faith amidst these stormy times, and united here now as by a providential coincidence; added to this the hopes, so near to us, of a happy immortality;—all this contributed

to lessen the horror and lighten the darkness of death. There were no convulsions, no agony, only a slumber that left her countenance almost smiling, a faint breathing that grew gradually fainter, until at last it ceased, and we rose up orphans. How shall I describe the desolation that broke forth then, and at the same time the inexpressible, incomprehensible inward peace that we all felt, the sense of a new blessedness that, in spite of ourselves, filled our hearts to overflowing! not ours only, but those of all those nearest and dearest to us. Then the immense concourse at her funeral, the tears of the poor, the prayers offered up on all sides spontaneously, and without any solicitation of ours, and then all the kindly sympathy of friends like you, who hastened to condole with us, and must have been surprised often to find us so tranquil in our great grief.

"Happy the man to whom God gives a holy mother!

"This dear memory will never forsake us. Often in my solitude now, in the midst of the anguish that weighs down my soul, the remembrance of that august scene returns to sustain and uplift me. I think of how short life is, how soon we shall be re-united with those from whom death has parted us, and then I feel all temptations of self-love, all the unworthy instincts of my nature, fade away, and my desires are concentrated in the single one of dying like my mother!

"Oh how I rejoice now that I did not abandon that blessed deathbed to run after the vague promises of University honours! If at this trifling sacrifice I should only have earned the privilege of passing a few more months near her, of being there on that last night, I am more than paid for it."

Seldom did the virtues of the dead justify more fully the tender and passionate panegyric in which the first outburst of sorrow expresses itself. It was no wild rhapsody

of grief, but the result of his life's deepest and most sacred experience to which Frederic gave utterance, when he said of his mother that she had been "the living image of the Church, and the most perfect revelation of Providence to her children." He continued all his life to invoke her in his necessities, to consult her in moments of doubt and distress, as when she was on earth, and he believed that her love and wisdom were empowered to help him as of yore. Two years after her death, he writes to a friend, who had just lost his mother:—

"Nothing is so appalling as the growing solitude, the void that death creates around us. I have gone through it all; but this state did not last long. There followed quickly another, when I began to *feel* that I was not alone, when I was conscious of something infinitely sweet in the depths of my soul; it was like an assurance that I had not been left alone; it was a benign, though invisible, neighbourhood; it was as if a cherished soul, passing close by, touched me with its wings. And, just as formerly I used to recognise the step, the voice, the breath of my mother, so now when a fresh breeze revived my strength, when a virtuous thought entered my mind, when a salutary impulse stirred my will, I could not but think it was still my mother. After a lapse of two years, when time might have dispelled what was merely the effect of an overwrought imagination, I still experience the same thing. There are moments when a sudden thrill passes through me, as if she were there by my side; above all, when I most stand in need of it, there are hours of maternal and filial intercourse, and then I shed more abundant tears perhaps than in the first months of my bereavement, but an ineffable peace is mingled with their sadness. When I am good, when I have done anything for the poor, whom she loved so tenderly, when I am at peace with God, whom

she served so well, I see her smiling on me in the distance. Sometimes, when I am praying, I fancy I hear her voice praying with me, as we used to do together at the foot of the crucifix every night. Often, in fact—this I would not breathe to any one, but I confide it to you—when I have the happiness of communicating, when our Saviour comes to visit me, it is as if she followed Him into my wretched heart, as many a time she followed Him when He was borne in Viaticum to the dwellings of the poor; and then *I believe firmly in the real presence of my mother near me.*"

CHAPTER XIV.

1840-41.

THE *Cours de Droit* for which Ozanam had so longed for his mother's sake, was not inaugurated until after her death. His opening speech made a sensation, and at once attracted crowds to the lectures. "The crowd was very great," he says to his cousin Pessonneaux, "and ever since, the hall has been equally well attended. It holds more than two hundred and fifty persons. I permitted myself, nevertheless, all sorts of philosophical and historical digressions; I did not even shrink from enunciating severe truths, while at the same time I seized any available opportunity of raising a smile on the countenances of my hearers, and so, as de Maistre says, the needle made the thread pass. The rector is enchanted at this success, and is vigorously pushing on my nomination in Quinet's place."

These lectures lasted but one scholastic year. They have been published by M. Foisset from the notes left by Ozanam. In an introductory notice, M. Foisset, himself a distinguished judge and jurist, observes, that "those who did not know Ozanam as a jurist did not know him fully. . . . Law was for him not merely what makes a good practitioner at the Courts; it was not the bare application of judicial texts to the business of daily life. Law was for him, above all, a branch of philosophy; it was a portion of history; it was even one side of literature. When a municipal chair

of law was created for him in his native town, he took possession of it, at the age of six-and-twenty, armed at all points on philosophy as on history, and on the positive theory of that portion of science which he was charged to teach. Deeply penetrated with the true mission of the Professor, he did not aim at accumulating in his lecture subtle judicial problems; he did not lose himself in endless discussions on contested points. He preferred teaching principles to doubts, inculcating rules of law, and clearly demonstrating their wisdom, instead of initiating his hearers, as he said himself, 'in the twofold scandal of the obscurity of laws, and the contradictoriness of judgments.'"[1]

These external compensations could not, however, fill up the blank which death had made in his life. His two brothers were absent, one on the mission, the other finishing his studies, and Ozanam, on coming home after his day's work, found no society by the once happy fireside but that of the devoted old Gui-gui. It was natural enough that doubts about his vocation, for a moment laid to rest, should now return stronger and more perplexing than ever. It seemed an aimless life, with no object but a personal career in view, discoursing a couple of hours a week at his class, poring over books with no very definite result, and only his labours amongst the poor to vivify the dry, commonplace routine. He felt all the old repugnance for the married state, and endeavoured to dissuade his friends from embarking in it when they asked his opinion. Loneliness and recent sorrow had so detached him from life, and made him so realise its brevity and vanity, that he shrank with a kind of horror from the thought of forging new chains which would bind him to it again. "In these arduous times," he says, "the ordinary engagements of marriage

[1] Foisset, Préface aux *Notes d'un Cours de Droit.* Œuvres complètes d'Ozanam, vol. viii. p. 325.

and paternity cannot suffice to generous souls, and outside the domestic sanctuary they continue to seek strength for the fight through associations of another kind. . . . As for myself, I look on without *arrière-pensée*, determined as I am not to occupy myself with the project of a state of life before the end of the next vacation. I owe at least one year's mourning to the memory of my poor mother. I shall meantime be able to see the Abbé Lacordaire on his return from Rome, and to assure myself whether Divine Providence may not be willing to open to me the doors of the order of St. Dominic. Between this and then I shall strive to win some little claim to fuller lights from above, by acquiring more austere habits and greater control over my passions, that thus I may have more certainty of being actuated by the right inspiration. I invite all my friends to help me with their prayers in these grave and decisive circumstances."

Yet it seems to us, as we watch the tenderness of his nature unconsciously revealing itself, that a friendly heart, near enough to his to hear its throbbings, could scarcely fail to recognise certain premonitory symptoms which might fairly be interpreted as signs of the future vocation. There is no ascetic note in the following joyous sympathy with the happiness of a young father :—

" . . . And so we are really to salute you in sober earnest by that title of 'father,' which we gave you in the old days as a merry nickname ! Has God given you the unspeakable consolation of seeing your youth come to life again under the features of childhood in the person of your own son ? Happy the first-born of an early marriage ! He will enjoy his parents in their green season; he will not see them growing grey until he has reached maturity himself, and the farewell of death will be only the signal of an approaching rendezvous; and you, too, will have had time to see

your work accomplished. . . . If the responsibilities of paternity alarm you, the hour is yet distant when they will be difficult, and meanwhile it is not a burden that God has given you, but a little angel, whose presence will sanctify your hearth, making virtue appear more lovely, and the path of life brighter. . . .

"We, on our side, are doing our best to keep alive that sacred fire of charity that you helped us to light. The little fire of St. Vincent de Paul lives and grows. The extraordinary demands of this winter revived our zeal. We are making some progress in the art of plundering the rich in behalf of the poor. . . . But how little all this is, my dear friend, in presence of a population of sixty thousand workmen, demoralised by indigence and by the propagation of evil doctrines! Freemasonry and socialism trade upon the misery and the angry passions of these suffering multitudes, and God alone knows what a future is in store for us if Catholic charity does not interpose in time to arrest the 'servile war' that is at our gates!

"Unhappily our ranks have more than one vacant place to show. There have been several departures, and one death. . . . While one poor friend was taking his flight to a better world, another was binding himself to this one by casting the golden anchor of a rich and happy marriage. You are aware of course that I allude to Chaurand. God has rewarded his many virtues by granting him all that constitutes happiness here below. These nuptials celebrated between two truly Christian families were very touching. There was none of the noisy merriment of a worldly *fête*, but a calm happiness that reminded one of the marriage-feast of Cana, and recalled the memory of Isaac and Tobias."

Yet it is certain, that while entering with poetic sympathy into the pure joys he describes, Frederic's heart continued

as yet free from any conscious desire to share them. He confides to a friend that he is obliged to be extremely circumspect in accepting invitations to *soirées*, as kindly-intentioned persons are setting matrimonial traps for him on every side, and he is exceedingly anxious to avoid being caught. Some of these friends, with a view to facilitating their benevolent designs, petitioned the Chamber of Commerce to grant the young Professor an increase of salary, which was very graciously done. Frederic's first thought on receiving the information is, "Oh! why is my mother not here to make me glad of it?" His worldly prospects were brightening daily, now that he had become indifferent to them.

In the holidays he made a journey to Paris :—

". . . The happy advent of the Easter holidays had interrupted my class, and restored full liberty to my locomotive faculties, when the necessity for settling some publishing matters, and, perhaps also, a longing to breathe the intellectual atmosphere of Paris, decided me to start off *incog.* on a little journey in that direction. . . . Everything turned out just as I wished, and I had the satisfaction at the same time of meeting the greater number of my old friends. I found them all contented and busy; great activity in the religious press; new writers, like Veuillot, carried off from the enemy and recruited to the good cause; everywhere converts of M. le Curé Desgenettes;[1] the pulpits filled by the Abbé Cœur, M. Bautain, the Père de Ravignan, and an Abbé Marcelin, who, if we may judge by his *début*, bids fair to compete with all of them one day.

"Thus the faith remains entire in the midst of the splitting-up of parties and schools. There were already three different shades of opinion amongst the Legitimists,

[1] The saintly old parish priest of N. D. des Victoires, which, when he was named to it, was the most impious and wicked parish in Paris.

more than six distinct categories amongst the Dynastics, and now the rancorous divisions of the Republican opposition are manifesting themselves. On the other hand, the days are far off when the *Globe* rallied the *élite* of the young press to rationalism; when the triumvirate, Cousin, Guizot, and Villemain filled a tribune at the Sorbonne no less powerful than that of the Palais-Bourbon. To-day there is not a single review, not one public class bold enough to formulate a doctrine; there is no stand-point for heterodox literature between sterile criticism and licentious profligacy. In such a state of things *we* should be masters of the field if we had men enough, if these men were united in distributing their forces, and if they were supported by sympathy from without. But if I am not mistaken, this is precisely the result that is being prepared, and for no very distant period. The humble efforts of the lowly and obscure will perhaps have had their share in clearing the way for great men and great doings. It is evident that the movement, which has been manifesting itself in divers forms, by turns weak and violent, pusillanimous and rash, philosophical and literary, the movement which produced the *Correspondant*, the *Revue Européenne*, the *Avenir*, the *Université*, the *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, the *Univers*, the Conferences of Notre Dame, the Benedictines of Solesme, the Dominicans of the Abbé Lacordaire, and even to the little Society of St. Vincent de Paul—facts of very unequal importance assuredly—it is evident, I say, that this movement, modified and restrained by circumstances, has begun to sway the destinies of the age. . . . Then, again, the orthodox Propaganda of England and America, the Catholic resistance in Ireland, Spain, and Germany, are one with us in their aim, their polemics, their manifestations; and the most cordial union on all these points exists between those whose influence is leading events and directing the general

opinion. The *Cattolico* of Madrid, the *Dublin Review*, the *Journal of Religious Science* of Rome, the *Catholic Miscellany* of Charleston, the *Courrier* of Franconia, all hold out their hand to us. . . .

"We are entering on a period of which no one can foresee the vicissitudes, but whose advent it is impossible to deny. It is nevertheless of good omen that it opens with an act of justice to the past. Filial piety brings luck. In linking ourselves once more by the old traditional bond to the eternal truths of Christianity, and to the laborious conquests of human experience, we shall be enabled to follow with less danger the progressive instinct which should enrich, and not repudiate, this glorious inheritance. Science will advance at a swifter pace when it finds the ground of first principles no longer disputed; talent will no longer be wasted calling into question in this nineteenth century of ours problems which Christianity had solved definitively, after they had vainly exhausted all the forces of human genius during four thousand years of ignorance and doubt.

"The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was not one of the least sources of joy and hope which I met with in my last visit to Paris. I saw assembled in the amphitheatre where it holds its sessions more than six hundred members, which does not make the total of its body in Paris. The majority was composed of poor students, but set off, as it were, by a few persons of the very highest social position. I elbowed a Peer of France, a Councillor of State, several Generals and distinguished writers. I counted twenty-five pupils of the École Normale (out of seventy-five that it numbers), ten of the Polytechnique, one or two of the École d'État Major. That morning one hundred and fifty members had gone up to the altar together. Letters were received from more than fifteen towns in France where conferences are in full operation; a similar number have been set on foot this

year. We are now nearly two thousand young men enrolled in this peaceful crusade of charity. . . . Now, too, that an ever increasing pauperism stands face to face, in rage and desperation, with a moneyed aristocracy whose bowels of mercy have grown hardened, it is well that there should be found mediators who may prevent a collision of which no man may foretell the horrible disasters, who will gain a hearing in both camps, and who will carry words of resignation to one and councils of mercy to the other, giving everywhere the password: *reconciliation and love.*"

It is only at the end of this long letter that he mentions a matter of serious interest to himself personally. Monsieur Cousin, who still coveted him for his own department, received him most affectionately, when Ozanam, as in duty bound, paid his respects to "his most honoured patron at the ministry." He invited him to breakfast, and inquired with friendly interest into his young protégé's position and prospects. "He told me of his intention to name me to Quinet's place next year," says Ozanam, "but he put a price upon the favour, of which he is naturally the master. He exacts that I shall come to Paris in the month of September to compete for the *Agrégation de littérature*,—a new institution whose success he holds to with an author's natural affection. He has repeated this invitation to me through several friends, then through the rector, and finally by a formal letter, so that it is impossible for me to get out of it. And yet the difficulty of the programme, bristling with the most knotty Greek texts, almost throws me into despair, and, with the work that my class gives me, I have the greatest difficulty to make out as much time as is absolutely necessary for the most superficial preparation."

He continued nevertheless to go on with it, and describes himself as devouring an enormous quantity of Latin without prejudice to the Code of Commerce, and being on

the point of losing his head, if God does not come to the rescue. "At the same time," he says, "the Propagation of the faith could not be neglected, and in the July number of the *Annales* you will find a long article, detestable in form very often, but important in substance, which I was obliged to write, in order to give from authentic sources a general statistic of the missions."

The *Agrégation* in question was a competitive examination which candidates for professorships in the University were obliged to undergo in virtue of a recent decree of M. Cousin. Ozanam, once fairly embarked as a competitor, threw all his energy into the necessary preparation. Now, as on the occasion of his nomination to the Chair of Law, he resolved to accept the issue as the final indication of his destiny. If he succeeded, and if the University were open to him, he would regard it as a sign that he was to serve truth in that sphere. He had never wavered in the internal conviction that whatever real good he was to do for his fellow-men, as a secular, must be done by teaching, not merely the law, as at present, but philosophy and history. The only way in which he could fulfil his vow was by making knowledge, in so far as he possessed it, instrumental in the manifestation of truth, and using science as a weapon to serve the cause of Christianity. He could not disguise from himself that Paris was the centre where this service could be best performed. At Lyons, young men had neither time nor inclination for attending philosophical lectures; as soon as they had finished their college studies and taken their *baccalauréat* they went into business. If, therefore, Ozanam succeeded at the approaching examinations, was it not essential, looking at his vocation from the point of faithfulness and self-devotion, that he should go forth from his own people and begin life anew in Paris? M. Ampère, whose opinion had greater weight

with him perhaps than any other, strongly urged him to adopt this course. While he was revolving these problems in his mind, a change was at hand which was to render their solution still more difficult to him.

The Abbé, now the Père, Lacordaire was still in Rome, but he had written to Ozanam, giving him a radiant description of his life in the novitiate, where he had been joined by eight young Frenchmen, all elect souls, one more gifted than the other. But Ozanam, in spite of his sympathy and admiration for these high examples, did not feel any more definite attraction to follow them. He saw no hand distinctly beckoning him on. He would wait and see Père Lacordaire, and examine the matter more closely. The Abbé Noirot, who knew him better than any one, had stood prudently aloof while the young man was thus groping his way to the light; but whenever Ozanam opened his heart to him on the subject, his answer invariably was "*mariez-vous, mon cher, mariez-vous.*" And the other would shake his head, not venturing to offer a flat contradiction to the advice of so wise a friend, though inwardly resenting it. The Abbé had always remained unshaken in his opinion that Ozanam had no vocation for the monastic life, that there was in him a need of tenderness and sympathy and encouragement, which made it desirable for him to marry; he had, moreover, settled in his own mind the wife that would best suit him out of all the young ladies in Lyons. But the old philosopher was far too cunning a judge of human nature, and of this particular specimen of it, to mention this, or even to make any attempt to bring about a meeting, shrewdly suspecting that the gentleman's perverse indifference and systematic habit of flying from those decoy birds, whom he classed in a body as "ces demoiselles," would frustrate the opportunity. Providence, however, who loves the pure of heart,

and takes their destiny in hand, was gently leading Ozanam blindfold on to his. He went one day to pay a visit to M. Soulacroix, the rector of the Academy. In passing through the drawing-room to his host's study, he stopped to present his respects to Madame Soulacroix, and, while doing so, noticed seated in the window a fair young girl, who was too busy attending to an invalid brother to pay any particular attention to the stranger whom her mother was speaking to. The stranger passed on, but while discoursing on philosophy and other lofty matters with the learned host, his eyes involuntarily wandered through the open door to the group in the window, where the bright fair face was bending over the young brother, caressing and amusing him. "How sweet it would be to have a sister like that to love one!" sighed Ozanam, as he watched the two; and, though he did not then suspect it, from that hour he was a lost man.

At the end of September he went to Paris to pass the most formidable examination he had yet encountered. He gives us the history of the event himself in a letter written three weeks later:—

"I came up in a terrible fright, convinced that my candidature would play me a sorry trick by causing me to lose whatever little consideration I enjoyed already in the minds of the Professors. When the dreaded day came, we were seven of us shut up under lock and key in a hall of the Sorbonne, with eight hours before us, for a Latin dissertation 'On the Causes which arrested the Development of Tragedy among the Romans.' I happened to be up in the question, but not being in the habit of composing quickly, I was at bay when the fatal hour struck, and I was obliged to hand in a rough copy disgracefully drawn up. The same adventure next day with the French dis-

sertation 'On the Historical Value of Bossuet's Funeral Orations.' The auspices were so unfavourable, that if it had not been for the indiscretion of one of the judges, who hinted to me that my compositions had succeeded, I should have withdrawn from the competition. . .

"Then came three separate argumentations on different days, and of three hours each, on Greek, Latin, and French texts, given twenty-four hours in advance. In Greek, I had to explain a chorus of Euripides' *Helen* and a fragment of Halicarnassus' *Rhetoric*,—very little philology, as you may imagine, and a vast amount of words, Helen considered as a poetic creation and a religious myth; the history of oratorical art in Athens and Rome. Finally a fragment of Lucian and a theological chapter of Pliny, discussion on the *rôle* of Cæsar and on the revolutions of religious doctrines amongst the Romans.

"In French, La Fontaine's *Philémon et Baucis* and Montesquieu's dialogue of *Sylla and Eucrates;* here came in a few bold conjectures on the causes of Sylla's abdication, a still more rash comparison between Montesquieu and St. Thomas Aquinas. This lively outburst of Catholicism, and two or three others which I indulged in, gave offence neither to the audience nor the jury; and a few reminiscences of Roman law brought in in order to interpret certain passages which, without this, would have been difficult of comprehension, were equally well received.

"After this ordeal followed the examination in the four foreign literatures. I went in at once for Dante, where I felt at home; Spanish, in which I had taken ten lessons, succeeded wonderfully. I pulled through Shakespeare; and as I had the luck to fall on one of the finest and most touching passages of Klopstock, the emotion with which I translated it produced the best effect. There still remained two lectures on different subjects for each candidate, and

designated by lot, one twenty-four hours, the other one hour, beforehand. The subject of ancient literature for me was 'The history of the Greek and Latin Scholiasts.' This looked really like a spiteful trick of fate, and it was so well known that I was not up in this philological *spécialité* that when the ticket which fell to me was read aloud, a mischievous titter ran through the public, composed chiefly of University men. I gave myself up for lost; and—although one of my rivals, M. Egger, with great generosity, passed on to me some capital books which he had by him,—after a night of watching and a day of anguish I was more dead than alive when the moment came for me to speak. Despair of myself prompted me to make an act of faith in God, such as I never made before; never either was I so rewarded. In short, your friend held forth on the scholiasts during seven quarters of an hour, with a freedom, an assurance that astounded himself; he succeeded not alone in interesting, but in moving and captivating both the judges and the audience, and withdrew with all the honours of war, having brought over the laughers to his side."

The last ordeal was comparatively easy, being a literary criticism on the century of Louis XIV., where Ozanam, to use his own words, "gave himself his fling." He was terrified for a moment at his own audacity. "I feared that I had blown up the ship," he says, "but all was taken in excellent part." They proceeded to the ballot (*scrutin*), and his name came out first. He could hardly credit it. His slowness in composing, and his great difficulty in improvisation, made him pronounce the verdict, "un mensonge bizarre," seeing that amongst the competitors were five young professors, "who, to great learning, united a ready, brilliant, and graceful improvisation." "If all this be not a dream," he adds, "or an impertinent trick of chance, there is but one way of justifying it. God gave me the

grace to bring to the struggle a faith which, even when it does not seek to manifest itself outwardly, animates the language, maintains harmony in the intelligence, and imparts warmth and life to the speech. Thus I may truly say, *in hoc vici*, and this idea, which at first sight seems the result of pride, is precisely what humbles at the same time that it reassures me.

"I am confounded by so wonderfully providential a success. I seem to see in it what you see,—an indication of the designs of God upon me; a real vocation, what for so many years my prayers have been imploring. My eldest brother is of the same opinion; I shall therefore walk, still in trembling, but with a calmer step, in the new career which has been opened to me by this singular event."

M. Fauriel, Professor at the Sorbonne, immediately offered Ozanam the position of Assistant Professor in the Chair of Foreign Literature, which he himself held. The position was a precarious one, he being liable to lose it in the event of M. Fauriel's health being sufficiently restored to enable him to dispense with a *suppléant*, as it is termed, and the salary was not quite a hundred pounds a year. The duties were, however, such as Ozanam felt especially qualified to fill, and the offer, coming immediately upon his extraordinary and unlooked-for success, seemed like a direct invitation from Providence. The subject which he was to treat, in the coming year, was the literature of Germany in the middle ages, beginning with the *Nibelungen* and the *Book of Heroes*. His "literary conscience," as he called it, determined him to undertake a short tour in Germany, in order to study the country upon whose literature he was going to lecture.

It was an interesting and critical moment for studying the religious aspects of that country. The Archbishop of Cologne, Monseigneur de Droste-Wischering, was in prison

owing to the firmness which he had displayed against the Prussian Government when it issued a decree ordering the Catholic clergy to conform to the prescriptions of the Prussian law on the subject of marriages between Catholics and Protestants. A few prelates thought fit to yield to the pressure of the State, and not to exact from the husband and wife the promise that the children should be brought up Catholics. Monseigneur de Droste was the foremost to set the example of uncompromising resistance, conformably to the canonical laws as laid down by Pius VIII. in a Brief of the 25th of March 1830. He was forthwith seized, in the middle of the night, by order of Frederic-William III., King of Prussia, and imprisoned in the fortress of Minden, from which he was soon after transferred to that of Colberg in Pomerania. On hearing of this, Pope Gregory XVI. pronounced an allocution in full consistory, and therein loudly expressed his admiration of the captive prelate's courageous conduct, and his sympathy with his sufferings.

Ozanam made but a short stay at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he visited the tomb of Charlemagne, "the great black stone, with its two words of sublime simplicity,—*Carlo magno.*" He hurried on to Cologne, the classic soil of German Catholicism, where the air is filled with marvellous legends, in which faith and superstition are so fascinatingly interwoven that the people cease to distinguish between the contending claims, and accept them all in childish and exuberant credulity. He visited the glorious cathedral, unfinished after its centuries of existence, and laments over its desolate condition of one "who has passed the age of hope, and has not even the consolations of memory."

". . . I saw the archiepiscopal throne empty," he writes, "but the church was full to overflowing; the crowd was packed so close, that in some places it was impossible to

kneel down. Picture to yourself the great audience of Notre Dame, but fancy it believing and praying. I must admit, nevertheless, that this German piety would astonish us a little by the imperturbable calm of its attitudes,—always standing up, with big blue eyes lifted to the roof, or wandering over the stained-glass windows, its ear evidently turned in the direction of the organ, its hands hanging, or fingering a book whose leaves don't turn over; from time to time a long, methodical sign of the cross, then the final genuflexion, and the *Ite missa est* taken literally. Worse than this, the shops are almost universally open on Sunday, and the crowds that pour straight out from Benediction to the *fêtes* of the Casinos testify to an inconsistency of character, or a want of proper instruction, which leads one to deplore still more deeply the absence of the pastor."

He revels for one day amidst the bewildering beauty of the churches of Cologne, once "the Rome of the Rhine." "My souvenirs of Italy are still fresh," he says; "nevertheless I must confess that nowhere, except in Rome, did I meet with anything to be compared to the variety, multiplicity, and antiquity of the sacred edifices through which I wandered with delight the whole day, . . . crying out with David, only in a less perfect sense, 'Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine virtutum!' No, it was not without reason that our fathers would have it so; the house of God ought to be loved by men, and the place that was to be holy should also be beautiful. Admiration is eminently a moral sentiment; it elevates, purifies, and prepares. Vandalism and Jansenism gave us a naked, impoverished worship, a sombre piety. They effaced, as scandals, the pictures which attracted the gaze of childhood; they silenced the music, whose power lifted up the hearts of the young men; they destroyed the dim twilight

that fell softly on the old man's eyelids; they suppressed those popular solemnities, those pious representations, those triumphal processions, to which the people flocked so joyously. Under pretence of driving out the vendors from the temple, they have driven away the little ones who cried Hosanna! And in the midst of those walls, whitewashed and despoiled, they have placed a new divinity, powerful in evoking silence and void around her; she is called *Ennui.*"

These reflections suggest to him the necessity of seconding all efforts tending to the restoration of Christian art. His artistic sense is shocked at every step to see these magnificent architectural *chefs-d'œuvre* disfigured and mutilated by "unenlightened repairs and offensive decorations, daubing and ignoble colouring thrown for the past five-and-twenty years over these beautiful edifices by the official trowel of the engineers." And yet the architects of these lovely wonders were Germans of from the eighth to the eleventh century, "great-grandsons of the Franks of Clovis, whom two hundred and fifty years of Christianity had sufficed to initiate into the most sublime and delicate mysteries of true beauty!"

Ozanam took ample notes of all these things as he passed rapidly along the Rhine, and observes with satisfaction that he is gleaning much that will be useful to him in his future studies. "When I shall have seen Mayence, where I arrive this evening," he says, "Frankfort, and Worms, the Germany of the middle ages will have passed before my eyes. It was there, it was at Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle, that the Emperors were crowned and deposed, that the diets were held, that the crusades organised. The names of Charlemagne, of the Othos, the Henrys, and the Frederics, reappear wherever there is an historical stone; and there is not a stone, not a rock, but has its history, its

tradition, or its fable." The weird, grandiose, and poetic landscape of the Rhine-country surprises and enchants him; it is unlike anything he has seen elsewhere, in France, in Italy, or Switzerland; the fantastic lines of the mountains as they rise and fall, and sally in and out by the banks of the broad, deep, limpid stream, whose waters do not strike him as "blue," but as a "beautiful sea-green," fill Ozanam with enthusiasm. He is quite prepared to accept the marvellous legends that echo through those solemn and airy hills. "Here is the rock of the dragon, where a German maiden, the Christian Andromeda, crucifix in hand, confounded the infernal serpent to which her idolatrous countrymen had exposed her; opposite rises the great stone of Roland; the hero came hither to mourn for his *fiancée* and die. . . . The Nibelungen, the Carlovingian epic, and the cycle of the Holy Grail, are there face to face. Myths still more ancient peopled the hill of Lurley and the caves of Kedrich with elfs and dwarfs. But, above myths and popular tradition, arise the grave realities of history." He touches with a light and accurate finger the prominent events that pass before his historical eye,—the Königs-Stuhl, where the electors of the empire held council in days of trouble and alarm; the Castle of Rheinstein, where the freebooting barons, who made the terror of the Rhine, and sat as portraits for so many of its gigantic myths, used to assemble to divide their plunder, and cut each other's throats when they could not agree about their respective share in it; the ruins of the monastery where St. Hildegard wrote her visions, the chapels founded by St. Helen, the bridge of Drusus, "the soil where, for the first time, the Roman eagle was planted, and where, for fifteen years, ours too reigned; the battle-field of our exploits of yesterday, and—who knows?—perhaps of to-morrow."

While Ozanam is tracking these footprints of the past,

and indulging in the meditations which they naturally suggested to so reflective a mind, a certain sadness steals over him at the thought that these bright and beautiful scenes, which have flitted before him like a vision, are now about to vanish and rejoin others once equally enjoyed, but now mere memories that grow paler and dimmer as the days go by. "I wish," he says, "that I could at least carry away in my mind all that my eyes are forsaking; but my memory does not retain the look of places; the shadow they leave behind fluctuates there for a while, and too often ends by vanishing altogether." He begins to fear, moreover, that his excursion has been a foolish escapade, that he has been like those scribblers of *feuilletons* who fly off "to discover" a country, or at best that it has been but a flimsy satisfaction granted to his scruples, "a shuffling pretence," as he says, "to enable me to say to my audience this winter: Gentlemen, I have seen! Just as, when I was a little boy, I used to dip the tips of my fingers into the water, in order to be able to say to my mother without telling a lie, 'I have washed myself!' Or, to fall back on grander comparisons, I am something like Caligula, who went as far as the Rhine, picked up pebbles, and came back to Rome to receive the honours of a triumph, with the surname of *Germanicus!*"

On his return from this flying expedition, Ozanam was called upon to prove himself by one of those elections which are seldom forced upon ordinary destinies; one of those decisions that place a man face to face with conscience and principle, leaving him no alternative but to renounce his ideal, or cleave to it with a fidelity little short of heroic.

That passing interview which had moved his gentle envy of the brother who had "such a sweet sister to love him," had been followed up by others, and soon there was

kindled in Frederic's heart as pure a flame as ever earthly love lighted in a manly breast. He offered himself to M. Soulacroix as a candidate for his daughter's hand, and was accepted. M. Soulacroix had long admired Ozanam, and watched his career with interest, auguring great things for him in the future. He was not a rich man himself, and he was not ambitious that his child should marry one; at the same time, he had that far-sighted parental prudence which makes a French father consider it little short of criminal to give his daughter to a man who cannot show a reasonable guarantee for her future.

Ozanam's pecuniary position was fair enough, seeing that he was not yet seven-and-twenty, and that his talent was steadily raising him to fame. But all this was compromised now. The recent triumph in Paris, by inviting him to the Sorbonne, left him no choice, if he accepted, but to throw up his position at Lyons, and embark on his new honours with a precarious salary of £100 a year, and the possibility of losing this any day by the death of M. Fauriel. When he came to consider the matter by the prosaic light of pecuniary considerations, it was not satisfactory to a man about to take charge of a wife. What would the wife herself say to it? Above all, what would her father say? Before he had summed up courage to lay the case before M. Soulacroix, an incident occurred which still further complicated things. M. Villemain, who had succeeded M. Cousin as Minister of Public Instruction, heard of Ozanam's engagement to the daughter of his friend the rector of the Academy, and wrote to offer him the Chair of Foreign Literature in the University of Lyons, recently vacant through the promotion of M. Quinet to the Collége de France. This, with the Chair of Law, which he would continue to fill, and other lectures that he gave at Lyons, brought his income up to close on £600 a year.

The position, moreover, in both cases, was for life. Here, indeed, was an opportunity of proving the sincerity of his ideal vocation. Should he renounce this substantial certainty, and go to Paris on a precarious hundred a year, simply because, as he believed, he could serve the cause of Christian philosophy more efficaciously there than in his native city? After asking for light that he might see God's will, and then at any and every sacrifice accomplish it, he went to consult M. Soulacroix. The rector's first movement was, naturally enough, one of emphatic disapproval. It seemed a mad imprudence on Ozanam's part, and it certainly would be on his if he encouraged it, or sanctioned his daughter's marriage under the circumstances. Ozanam, however, pleaded his cause so eloquently, that the wise elderly man had to admit there was something to be said on the side of the heroics. He had, moreover, almost unlimited confidence in the young man's energy and talent, and knew that he would avail himself to the full of the magnificent opportunity which the Sorbonne opened to him, and that he was likely, moreover, to reach eminence much sooner by being brought into personal contact, as he would be in Paris, with the influential men who could serve him. But it was one thing to admit all this in the abstract, and another to counsel his son-in-law to act upon it. Ozanam, with a stroke of policy worthy of Talleyrand, determined to appeal to his *fiancée*, shrewdly suspecting that if he won her consent the day was gained. He laid the case frankly before her. If they remained at Lyons, he could offer her comfort, security for the future, and the happiness, which both of them valued, of remaining amongst their own people, but by doing this he would forfeit what he believed to be the noblest part of his service, that which involved sacrifice and self-renunciation. In going to Paris they would have to face poverty; but he would have a wide

field for usefulness, and all the conditions of a noble mission. Had she sufficient trust in herself and in him to choose the higher and harder part? Amélie placed her hand in his, and said, "I will trust you."

And so they went forth together, rich in mutual confidence, in love and faith, though poor enough in the goods of this world.

The moment this choice was approved and his marriage decided, the most profound peace succeeded to the anxiety and agitation to which Ozanam had been a prey during the interval of uncertainty.

"Oh how much I have to say to you!" he writes to Lallier, "and how suddenly this grave question of vocation, so long doubtful, has been solved! Just as Divine Providence calls me back to the perilous sojourn of the capital, He sends me an angel to guard and console my solitude! I now go, leaving behind me an engagement, which is to be concluded on my return. I should have had recourse to your good advice if events had not precipitated themselves with such unforeseen rapidity. I have now recourse to your prayers. May God preserve, during these six months, her whom He seems to have chosen for me, and whose smile is the first sunbeam of happiness that has brightened my life since my poor father's death.

"You will find me very tenderly smitten. I don't attempt to disguise it, although sometimes I cannot help laughing at myself! I thought my heart was more invulnerable. . . .

"You will find me very happy. It will be a compensation for all the times that you shared my sorrows."

His marriage took place on the 23d of June; in the sunny month of the roses.

"Last Wednesday," he informs Lallier a week after the event, "at ten o'clock in the morning, in the church of

St. Nizier, your friend was on his knees; at the altar his eldest brother lifted up his sacerdotal hands, while the younger one made the liturgical responses. At his side, you would have seen a young girl dressed in white, and veiled, pious as an angel, and already,—she gives me leave to say it,—tender and affectionate as a friend. Happier than I, she was surrounded by her parents; all that Heaven has left me of a family here below was there; and my old comrades, my friends of St. Vincent de Paul, with numerous acquaintances, filled the choir and peopled the nave. It was beautiful. The strangers who had strayed in by chance were deeply moved. As to me, I did not know where I was. I could scarcely restrain my tears, big, delicious tears, as I felt the Divine blessing descending on us with the consecrated words.

"Oh, my dear Lallier! you, the companion of my toils and weariness, you, the consoler of my evil days, why were you not there? I would have asked you to place your signature to the commemorative deed of this great *fête*. I would have presented you to the charming bride who has been given to me, and she would have greeted you with that smile of hers that enchants every one; and since then, during those few days that we have been together, what calm, what serenity reigns in that soul that you have known so unquiet, so ingenious in self-torture! I let myself be happy. I take no count of hours or moments. The lapse of time is nothing to me. What do I care about the future? Happiness is in the present—it is eternity. . . . I understand heaven now.

"Help me to be good and grateful. Each day, in revealing to me new perfections in her whom I possess, increases my debt towards Providence. . . . What a difference from those days in Paris when you saw me so sad!

"I am almost forgiven for having shown you a certain letter then; I shall be forgiven entirely when you are known to the offended person. You are invited to the house-warming in the month of November."

"My happiness is great," he writes a few days later to the son of his kind protector, M. Ampère; "it surpasses all my hopes and dreams. Since the day that the benediction of God descended on me, I am dwelling in a sort of enchanted calm, so serene, so sweet, that nothing can give an idea of it. The angel who is come to me clothed in every grace and virtue is like a new revelation of Providence in my obscure and laborious destiny; I am illuminated with interior joy. But this light, which fills my soul, casts no shadows over the memories of the past, and above all on those where gratitude plays a part. The thought of you was present to me amidst those friends who crowded round me at the foot of the altar. And afterwards, in those delightful conversations with my new family, who like to hear me talk over bygone years, your name, like that of your venerated father, comes up at every instant, and is always greeted by the most sincere expressions of gratitude. I could never express mine as I wished, and yet,—I know you will forgive me for saying it —I feel almost as if I were quits with you when I hear you praised by those lips whose every word thrills through me."

No wonder he was happy, entering as he did on the married life with such pure aspirations, such a lofty idea of its duties and privileges. Here is his description of what a Christian marriage should be:—

"In marriage there is not only a contract, there is, above all, a sacrifice, a twofold sacrifice. The woman sacrifices that which God has given her, and which is irreparable, that which was the object of her mother's

anxious care,—her fresh, young beauty, often her health, and that faculty of loving which women have but once. The man, in his turn, sacrifices the liberty of his youth, those incomparable years which never return, that power of devoting himself to her he loves, which is only to be found at the outset of his life, and that effort of a first love to secure to her a proud and happy lot. This is what a man can do but once, between the age of twenty and thirty, —a little sooner, a little later, perhaps never. This is why I say that Christian marriage is a double sacrifice. It is two cups; one filled with virtue, purity, innocence; the other with an untainted love, self-devotion, the immortal consecration of the man to her who is weaker than himself, who was unknown to him yesterday, and with whom to-day he is content to spend the remainder of his life; and these two cups must both be full to the brim, in order that the union may be holy, and that Heaven may bless it."[1]

After spending a month in the Dauphiné, the young married couple set out on a tour through Italy. The sacrifice of a portion of the sum set aside to furnish their house defrayed the expenses of the journey. It was a little rash, perhaps, but they were both young, and overflowing with trust in the future, and in one another.

"Only have confidence in me," said the young husband, when they settled to part with the money that would have adorned their little home, "and I will, please God, before long give you the prettiest furniture that is to be had."

They travelled of course with the utmost simplicity, but from first to last "the journey was like an enchanted dream." They loitered longer than they should have done in Sicily, fascinated by "the rich African nature," so dif-

[1] Les Femmes Chrétiennes. Vide *Civilisation au 5me siècle*, vol. ii. p. 97.

ferent from anything they had seen elsewhere. "A real tropical vegetation; the fig-trees of Barbary and its gigantic aloes enclosing, like an impenetrable wall, gardens where the cotton-tree, the papyrus, and the sugar-cane grow; terrestrial paradises, where every variety of the cedrate, the citron, and the orange clustered luxuriantly with their golden fruit; the sea-shore covered with little palm-trees; the myrtle and oleander flowering by the road-side; while here and there the tall palm rose high into the air with its crown of broad leaves, and bunches of dates suspended from them. All this hemmed in in the Strait of Messina, at the foot of Etna, with its brow of snow, in that gulf of Palermo whose wild beauty surpasses, to my idea, all the boasted beauties of Naples."

But what interests him most are the traces of Greek and Roman antiquity that he finds scattered throughout Sicily; the empty tombs, the ruined temples, the fragments of marble gods, pillars, theatres, baths, all the rich and varied vestiges of a classical past. He takes volumes of notes as he wanders through the silent, solemn ruins, seeing everywhere "the grand inspirations of genius and all its follies; the progress of art, from the austere nakedness of its first monuments to the somewhat over-exuberant decoration of its latest." He is charmed to find the people cherishing, with a kind of filial worship, this precious inheritance of the past; to find also that they retain the old faith in its fervour, and the primitive manners of their fathers. "One evening," he says, in a letter to his father-in-law, "in a pretty hamlet by the sea-shore, when the angelus had rung for the churches to be closed, we saw the inhabitants shut their doors behind them and go off in procession to salute the Blessed Sacrament with a last homage. Again and again we have met with the most patriarchal hospitality from a venerable peasant host in passing through a village

or descending from our litter. We have been surrounded and compelled to enter some humble dwelling, where they would place the little children on our knees to get a kind word, or a caress. In the monasteries we have come in contact with eminent and excellent men, sometimes with an amount of learning that confounded me, and always with a degree of politeness that enchanted Amélie. She will always remember the Capuchins of Syracuse and the Benedictines of Catania. But it would seem that she possesses, above all, the gift of charming the good religious of St. Francis, for in our journey from Naples to Rome she was the object of the kindest attentions of the old *Procureur-Général* of the Observantines, who ever since accosts us with the blandest smile in his long white beard. Yesterday, again, at San Pietro, in Montorio, a Capuchin, of whom we inquired the way, offered her a bouquet of roses. In fact it would be enough to make one tremble, if in this country virtue was not equal to courtesy."

But the ten days which the travellers passed in Rome were the crowning joy of their expedition. What they achieved in the way of sight-seeing and visits, besides taking notes for future use, is absolutely incredible. Everything was as fresh a wonder to Ozanam as if it had been his, as well as his young bride's, first glimpse of the Eternal City. He is filled with pious exultation when the colossal vision of St. Peter's bursts upon them as they approach the city by sea, and they behold the dome, the vast and wondrous dome, "like the diadem of the Papacy suspended between heaven and earth." They go up to the neighbouring hills to watch the sun setting behind the neighbouring basilica, and it appears to Ozanam as "the emblem of that institution which we behold ever erect and immovable while we are passing on the waves of time, and on which the last sun of humanity will set."

CHAPTER XV.

1842.

THE chair to which Ozanam was named was one which his mental and moral endowments fitted him admirably to fill. It was the realisation, moreover, of those ambitions which he had cherished, like the presentiment of a mission, and for whose fulfilment he had been preparing himself from his early boyhood.

But the Professor's fitness for his post did not obviate the fact that it was one of peril, beset with dangers and difficulties.

MM. Guizot, Villemain, and Cousin had for some years past formed a triumvirate of genius which had raised the standard of professorships at the Sorbonne to the highest point of critical severity; it was therefore a tremendous ordeal for the inexperienced young provincial doctor of law to be brought into competition with such rivals. This rivalry was none the less formidable from the fact that the three celebrated masters owed no small portion of their popularity and oratorical success to their being the champions of a strong political opposition, and to the fact that with them the Professor's chair was frequently transformed into a political tribune, where science and literature disappeared to make way for theoretical disquisitions that tickled agreeably the ears of a socialist, and even revolutionary, audience. But Ozanam, even if he had not been too humble to court popularity for its own sake, was far too

scrupulous to have condescended to any foils or arts for the purpose. He was bent solely on the accomplishment of his mission as a teacher of youth. But here, at least, the example of his illustrious colleagues afforded a valuable precedent; it justified him in using his rostrum in the University as a pulpit for the propagation of truth through the medium of science, poetry, and history. It might have been more prudent in his own interest if he had confined himself to lecturing on these subjects in themselves, instead of making them the vehicle of Christian philosophy; but personal considerations weighed lightly with Ozanam against the dictates of duty. He remembered his vow, and he kept to it as the stars keep to their course. He knew perfectly that in adopting this conduct he was committing himself to a manifestation of faith which would in all probability cost him dear.

The times were excited; the public mind was envenomed against religion, or liable to become so at the slightest touch; reprisals were violent and prompt. The grand question of freedom of education (*la liberté d'enseignement*) was being hotly contested in the Press and the Tribune. M. de Montalembert, the chivalrous captain of the Catholics, was breaking lances with all comers in the cause of liberty, charming the chilly souls of his antique brother peers by the spell of his eloquence, and firing them with a passing thrill of his youthful enthusiasm. All who would fight stood armed at his call, ready to follow him on to any encounter. There were divisions in the camp—as when have there not been?—but there was not a single traitor. Ozanam, from his peculiar position, was marked out to a post in the advance-guard. Montalembert had called him a brother-in-arms, and the time had come for him to vindicate a title which he was proud to bear.

It was nearly half a century since the voice of a Chris-

tian teacher, a teacher identified with the Christian faith, had been heard in the Sorbonne, while, on the other hand, its walls had echoed unceasingly to every false and fantastic doctrine of the Voltairian and Rationalistic schools; and this absence of talent, or at least this silence among the Catholic men in the great seat of learning, went far to sanction the popular idea that talent, not to say genius, had utterly disappeared from the Catholic ranks. But now a new era had begun. At the age of seven-and-twenty, Ozanam took his seat amongst the veterans of the proud old University, and electrified young and old by the splendour of his gifts and the burning ardour of his faith. It was a strange coincidence that the same audience which so lately had listened with delight while Villemain and Cousin exposed their favourite theses, should now hear, with no less favour, those same theses energetically denounced from the same rostrum by the daring new-comer.

It was a rash experiment on his part. The State as yet held the monopoly of the University, and looked with an evil eye on the men who were leading the war against it in behalf of the rights of the Church. It was natural enough too that an assembly of young men, all enlisted in warm partisanship on one side or the other, but amongst whom the opponents of the Church largely predominated, should form a dangerous audience for a Professor of Ozanam's ardent religious convictions. But he did not stop to calculate risks; and Fortune, who sides mostly with the brave, stood by the young champion of the Gospel. Here was no sophist, no subtle philosopher striving to palliate hard sayings, or smooth down unpalatable propositions, but a dauntless knight, who rode into the lists with his drawn sword flashing in the sunlight, and, flinging down his gauntlet, dared all comers to pick it up. He dealt in no compromise, he made no concessions to the hostile

susceptibilities of his hearers. The sceptics heard him in astonished admiration, the Catholics applauded with a sense of victory. "Athens listened," says the Père Lacordaire, "as she would have listened to Gregory or Basil, if, instead of returning to the solitudes of their native land, they had poured out at the foot of the Areopagus, where St. Paul was preaching, those treasures of science and taste which were to illustrate their names."

The field of Ozanam's new labours embraced an almost boundless horizon, for it was not a question of initiating his hearers into the familiar beauties of Greek and Roman classics, but of introducing them to the unknown and endless storehouses of foreign literature,—the poets, philosophers, historians, writers of every nation who have enriched their native tongues with a legacy of genius. He had qualified himself for the task by a thorough knowledge of modern languages and literatures, and he held from nature that gift which is the crown and compendium of so many others—eloquence. Like many gifts of the highest order, it was purchased at a price. To the end of his life a *début* was always a painful ordeal to Ozanam. It did not matter where it was, in the solemn precincts of the Sorbonne, in a quiet schoolroom, in a *tête-à-tête* with a student, or in a drawing-room circle, so long as he had not spoken he shrank from speaking. He would remain an entire evening listening to the conversation going on around him without ever volunteering a remark unless it was directly elicited; but if any one appealed to him he answered willingly, at first with a certain hesitation, as if he were looking for his words, but after a few sentences the dumb demon was exorcised, and his conversation flowed on in a clear and brilliant stream. Nor did the silence, which he was sure to command the moment he began to talk, intimidate, but the contrary: it stimulated and encouraged him.

The same effect was visible, only in a much more striking degree, in his public speaking. Those who attended his lectures at the Sorbonne continued year after year to note with wonder the distress that invariably accompanied the opening sentences. His appearance, as he ascended the rostrum, betrayed a high degree of nervous agitation. He was pale almost to ghastliness; his dark eye wandered over the heads of his audience, as if dreading to encounter a direct glance; his utterance was laboured, his whole manner constrained. You were unconsciously reminded of a musician trying to master an indocile instrument whose notes refuse their office to his beseeching fingers, and only send forth broken and inarticulate sounds. This interval never failed, but it was of short duration; after a few minutes it passed away swiftly and imperceptibly; the speaker resumed his self-command, emotion overcame diffidence and burst the bonds of the tongue-tied spirit; his eye kindled, and met responsive glances boldly; his action, always simple, grew animated and expressive; his voice rang out in full and thrilling tones, until the audience, wrought to sympathy with the rising flame, caught fire at it and broke out into short but irrepressible bursts of applause. The victory once gained, the orator held it to the end, rising to loftier flights as he proceeded, and keeping his hearers captive to the close.

If we except this passing impediment, resulting in a great measure no doubt from a weak and highly nervous physical temperament, Ozanam possessed all the elements of the purest eloquence—a ready and retentive memory, a clear conception, a facility for rigidly sketching the outline of his subject, and filling it up in strong, brilliant, and delicate colours. Many would have been dazzled by the inheritance, or would at least have remained satisfied with so ample a birthright, and spared themselves the toil of

laborious cultivation; but Ozanam worked as if nature had denied him everything but the faculty of working. The gifts he held from the gratuitous bounty of God were but so many incentives to the acquirement of richer and greater things by patient and persevering labour. Nothing better illustrates this than his manner of preparing his lectures. Most men, feeling themselves thoroughly master of their subject from long previous study, would have been satisfied with rapidly reviewing it, and jotting down a few notes on the leading points to be treated. But Ozanam proceeded differently. On the evening before his *cours* he retired early to his study, and selecting from his accumulated materials the notes and texts he wanted, he proceeded to classify them in orderly sequence. This done, he placed his subject before him and meditated on it until the central idea clearly disengaged itself, and the moral truth that it embodied stood out in distinct relief. He would pass long hours in this solitary and direct contemplation of the beautiful and the true, and the night was often far gone when an anxious voice broke in upon his musings. Early next morning he would resume the interrupted chain of thought, and then, when the time came, after invoking on his knees the light and aid of the Holy Spirit, he went forth to deliver his message.

As he hurried on his way through the gardens of the Luxembourg, his head bent, his brow still contracted in deep thought, you might have taken him for a man in a dream. Thus it was that the *savan* presented himself at the Sorbonne, and ascended his chair to encounter that terrible moment of *angoisse* which we have described.

His manner of lecturing was full of charm; he dispensed his vast erudition with the simplicity of a boy, and with a prodigality that belongs only to inexhaustible abundance. Every one of his lectures was a book con-

densed into a chapter, and he frequently compressed into a sentence an amount of thought and information which a mind less magnificently replenished would have diluted into a chapter, telling away in an hour, like the intellectual spendthrift that he was, the treasure it had taken years to accumulate. He stripped knowledge of half its difficulties by his way of imparting it. Knowledge with him was not so much an intellectual system as a mental habit, which had become a part of his being; he did not divest himself of it, as some men do, taking it up and laying it down at stated times; when the signal came for him to impart it officially, he did not seem to stand up and perform the functions of a Professor so much as to avail himself of an opportunity for revealing the rich deposit of thought, scientific analysis, and observation which life-long study had left in his mind; he gave it out naturally, spontaneously, and with the real enthusiasm of a devout scholar,—devout in the sense of devoted; his devotion to science, and to his own particular branch of it—history,—partook of the nature of his religion; it was to his mind what faith was to his soul. It was the spontaneity of his method, united to its finished art, which exercised such fascination on all, and possessed such an unrivalled power of attraction for the young. They were interested and enchanted even before they were convinced. If they arrived at the lecture-hall ignorant of the subject, or indifferent to it, they were quickly excited to a curiosity which put an end to indifference and stimulated to inquiry and investigation. Few minds ever possessed, in a higher degree, the faculty of kindling the minds of others with his own,—a faculty which may be taken as the supreme test of mental and moral power. Ozanam followed the Socratic method, of which he had learned the secret from M. Noirot. Taking hold of the mind on every side, by sympathy, by the

reason and the imagination, he compelled the student to work with his own brains, while following the working of another's.

M. Cousin once exclaimed, on coming out from a lecture of Ozanam's, "The Lyceums and Colleges send us distinguished Professors, but the Abbé Noirot sends us men." Following in the footsteps of his venerable master, Ozanam strove, above all, to make men of his pupils, to impart to them his own manly, vigorous spirit and love of work. No one admired fine native gifts more than he did; but there was something that he prized even more than talent; this was industry, energy—*bonne volonté*, as he termed it. He would take endless pains with a student whom he saw trying to supplement by diligence and courage a nature scantily endowed. He was gentle, even respectful, to dulness, as he was to poverty in every shape; and it sometimes happened that, under his fostering influence, those who had utterly failed with other masters unexpectedly developed with him latent capacities which had hitherto remained stubborn and unproductive. There was one poor lad at the Collége Stanislas who had been so long a fixture at the bottom of his class that the masters had ceased to pay any attention to him, looking upon him as hopelessly stupid. Ozanam, on being appointed Professor at the College, watched the boy for a time, and then called him up to his desk one day and encouraged him kindly, taking great pains to make him understand the subject of the lesson. The lad was so touched and surprised that, when Ozanam was gone, he sat down and wrote to thank him, assuring him his kindness should not be lost. "*Je vous jure que je ferai l'impossible pour vous prouver ma reconnaissance*," he said, and he kept his word. At the end of the year he carried off the first prize at the Grand Concours, and at the present moment he is a member of the Academy.

Nor was this an isolated case. Stanislas stood low amongst the Paris colleges when Ozanam was named Professor of Rhetoric there; none of its pupils had ever gained a single prize at the Grand Concours.[1] The first year of his professorship they carried them all away, and the number of pupils in his class had doubled. He had contrived, during that short time, to inspire them with such a passion for study that many, of their own free impulse, asked permission to double their year of rhetoric. The pupils loved him almost to idolatry. When he appeared amongst them for the first time he said, "I shall never punish you; I mean to treat you as men, to do my best for you, and to trust to your doing the same. If you do not agree to this, if you behave like *gamins*, I will not lose my time with you." They took him at his word. During the eighteen months that he remained their Professor, he never had so much as to call one of the boys to order. Their respect showed itself in a reserve not common to schoolboys: they never laughed at him. One morning when he was suffering severely from toothache, he entered the room with a cap pulled down over his ears; one of the boys tittered, and made some joke at the master's expense; he was immediately seized and hustled out of the class before Ozanam was aware of any disturbance. No man in his position was ever so much beloved in Paris; it was almost an adoration. After hanging upon his lips at the Sorbonne, bursting out every now and then as if in spite of themselves into sudden gusts of applause, and then hushing one another for fear they should lose one of the master's words, his young audience would follow him out of the lecture-hall, shouting and cheering, putting questions, and elbowing their way up for a word of recog-

1 The Grand Concours is a yearly competition between all the first colleges in Paris.

nition, while a band of favoured ones trooped on with him to his home across the gardens. They never suspected what an additional fatigue this affectionate demonstration was to the Professor, already exhausted by the preceding hour and a half's exertion, with its laborious proximate preparation. No matter how tired he was, they were never dismissed; he welcomed their noisy company, with its eager talk, its comments and questions, as if it were the most refreshing rest. There was, indeed, only one reward that Ozanam coveted more; this was when some young soul, who had come to the lecture in doubt or unbelief, suddenly moved by the orator's exposition of the faith, as it was embodied or shadowed forth in his subject, opened his eyes to the truth, and, like the blind man in the Gospel, cried out, "giving thanks."

One day, on coming home from the Sorbonne, the following note was handed to him: "It is impossible that any one could speak with so much fervour and heart without believing what he affirms; if it be any satisfaction, I will even say happiness, to you to know it, enjoy it to the full, and learn that before hearing you I did not believe. What a great number of sermons failed to do for me, you have done in an hour: you have made me a Christian! . . . Accept this expression of my joy and gratitude."

You have made me a Christian! Oh! let those who believe and love like Ozanam tell us what he felt, what joy inundated his soul when this cry went forth to him.

He loved the young, and had the secret of gaining their fullest confidence. The students came to him in all their troubles, consulted him about their studies, about everything in which they wanted direction, and he gave himself up to them as if it was his most important business. He saw them every morning from eight to ten, except on the day of his *cours*, and for these two hours the room adjoin-

ing his study was besieged as if it had been the ante-chamber of a minister. He never hurried the most tiresome lad away, no matter how busy he was, or how inopportunely the visitor had interrupted his own important work.

It has been said with truth that Ozanam himself was never young, that he was a man from his childhood, aged prematurely by anxiety, thought, and study; it is certain that, as a friend who had known him from childhood said, "he had no youth in the stormy sense of the word;" but it is equally true in another sense that he remained always young; young in sympathy with the ideal aspirations, the ardent efforts, the bright dreams, the high resolves and enthusiasms which constitute the glory of the vision of youth, and its loveliest prerogative. All this Ozanam held to the last. He had seen some of his own dreams vanish and his hopes denied, but when he beheld a young spirit standing on the shore of life, and taking wing for its seductive visionary flights, his heart beat high in responsive pulses; he was never the one to chill by the cold smile of experience the faith of the young pilgrim in his fair vision of hope. What if he soared too high at first, and fell, ruffling and bruising his wings in the descent? It was better than never to have risen, better than to remain crawling on the low safe level of selfish aims and narrow interests and ignoble pleasures. Faith in the ideal was too strong with Ozanam for the experiences of life, however disappointing, to destroy it.

His letters to his family prove better than anything how earnestly he had at heart the Professor's duties which were now his life's vocation.

TO M. SOULACROIX.

"*January* 27, 1842.

"I have resumed my class, and although the subject begun last year is now more restricted, more special and

less attractive, the audience continues assiduous; always numerous and well-disposed.

"But the fuss of our arrival, the multiplicity of visits, the things that must be seen to, a few articles for the newspapers, have not left me the necessary leisure to occupy myself with writing a book.

"Many of my hindrances arise from the actual condition of science and thought in our time. Now-a-days the progress of historical and literary science has led them to proceed like mathematical and natural sciences; they isolate themselves in their special sphere, they create a technical language for themselves, and being thus inaccessible except to the small number of the initiated they cease to be popular. Hence it follows that books and lectures which are accessible to the generality of enlightened minds acquire no consideration amongst a certain class of men, whose works in their turn dishearten general readers by the severity of their form. Assuredly, with genius one would know how to avoid both the pedantry of the learned and the superficial mediocrity of the vulgar; but genius is a rare and supreme gift which God bestows once or twice in a century, and which has not been lavished in the present one. For myself, I have almost always found that my best and happiest works have been the least enjoyed by men of the guild.

"My class has had precisely the advantage of collecting a great number of hearers, and consequently being accessible to them, without at the same time failing in the gravity due to a special theme. Nevertheless, amongst the many weighty personages who have followed it, no one has advised me to publish my lectures simply revised from the stenographer. Besides, as I touched upon many questions that are hotly contested in Germany, a book on this subject, in order to be strong and weighty, would

exact an immense amount of verification. Criticism has a much firmer hold upon written than spoken words; it is also doubtful whether if in France, where purely literary questions excite but feeble interest, a book on German literature in the middle ages would meet with any great popularity. Several persons whom I consulted, especially M. Mignet and M. Ampère, have advised me to choose for the theme of my lectures something less general, an episode, so to speak, which would be more restricted, so that I might treat it thoroughly, and thus satisfy the more exacting judges; at the same time it should have a general and positive interest, in order to attract favour from the wider public. I think I have hit upon these very conditions in some lectures of last year—the best, perhaps, I have ever given—on the Holy Roman Empire of the middle ages. The empire, the universal monarchy of Christian times, as the genius of Charlemagne conceived, and his successors imperfectly realised it, developed in the public law, in the philosophy and the poetry of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, engaging in a struggle with the Papacy, falling in the struggle, and leaving behind it nothing but a German empire, dwindled at the present day to the proportions of an Austrian one.

"It is not the history of the facts in detail, it is above all the philosophical history of the institution, such as the German writers represent it, that I find stamped with this idea. A work like this, which has never yet been written, would throw great light on the general affairs of old Europe. It would discover to the world the causes of the fall of Italy and the greatness of France; there would be room in it for the most celebrated personages of those times: Gregory VII., Innocent IV., Frederic Barbarossa, Rodolph of Hapsburg. The great doctors, jurists, and poets would figure on the scene as witnesses, and thither

all my studies would converge, only remanipulated and put into action."

At the close of the scholastic year he thus relates his own impressions of its results :—

TO LALLIER.

"*Aug.* 17, 1842.

"It was only at the close of my lectures that the serious interest of the subject revealed itself to me distinctly. It is a case of proving that Germany owes her genius and her whole civilisation to the Christian education she received; that her greatness was in proportion to her union with Christendom; that she drew her power, her light, her poetry, from her fraternal connections with the other nations of Europe; that for her, as for others, there is, there can be, no real destiny except through Roman unity, the depository of the temporal traditions of humanity, as well as of the eternal designs of Providence. All this looks simple, natural, almost trivial in its self-evident truth this side of the Rhine; but, on the other hand, the national pride plumes itself in dreams of an autochthonous civilisation from which Christianity has, by the way, caused them to decline; in a literature which, without contact with the Latin, would have developed into unexampled splendour; in a future, in fact, which promises to be magnificent, provided it steeps itself in unmixed and unalloyed Teutonism. The German type is no longer Charlemagne, but Arminius.

"These doctrines pierce in divers forms through the various philosophical, historical, and literary schools, from Hegel to Goethe, from Goethe to Strauss. It seems to me advisable to attack them at home, on their own ground; to show how *alone* they were simply barbarians; how, thanks to their bishops, their monks, to the Roman faith,

the Roman language, the Roman law, they entered into possession of the religious, scientific, and political inheritance of modern nations; how in repudiating it they fell back gradually into barbarism. An introduction which will precede and conclusions that will follow the history of the literature of German chivalry, the principal object of my book, will, I hope, bring out this idea in strong relief.

"I am occupied at present with the introduction. My former lectures are of very little use to me for this chapter, whose importance I discovered rather late; I have had to make immense researches:—Germany under the Romans, its military institutions, municipal organisation, schools; the first preaching of Christianity before the invasion of the barbarians; the action of the Church in presence of and after the invasion; the formation of the State: the empire on one hand, the towns on the other; lastly, the preservation and propagation of letters; the uninterrupted teaching of the languages and arts of antiquity; the admirable works achieved in the monasteries of Fulda and of St. Gall become the schools of Germany.

"In the absence of general treatises, I had to hunt through particular histories, through the lives of saints and the chronicles of the towns. I think I have discovered unknown and conclusive facts, which will establish the perpetuity of the learned tradition, in an epoch that we are accustomed to hear branded with the name of barbarous, from Charles Martel to the Crusades. I am going to put this into shape (it will extend to about two hundred and fifty pages), and I will print a portion of it in the *Correspondant* in order to elicit some good advice."

TO HIS BROTHER CHARLES.

"To-day is Sunday; we are in a little palace with a garden on the edge of the Luxembourg, whose green alleys

form a delightful prospect from our windows. This abode was built for Murat, brother-in-law of the Emperor and King of Naples; it came later on into the hands of the Prince de Clermont Tonnerre; from one fall to another it fell finally into the possession of M. Bailly, who has kindly allowed us to take up our residence here during the great heat.

"I remember that Alphonse must by this have left Lyons, that you are alone, and that consequently a little brotherly visit will not come amiss to you. And this reminds me, my dear boy, that we must strengthen our mind and our heart so as not to be afraid of solitude, and not to give way to those temptations to melancholy which are sure to assail us in it. You will soon be eighteen; at this age I had to leave all—for in those days we had all to leave—and to come away here, where I had not, like you, a brother and many friends; instead of that I had a lonely room, books that had no memories for me, strange faces everywhere around me.

"For you, whatever God's will may be, wheresoever your vocation may lead you, you will find a brother who will be a guide and a support to you; you will find the way prepared for you, a circle of friends, many less dangers awaiting you. You are in one of those periods of life when all the faculties take a rapid development; we feel ourselves growing and maturing. If I were near you, I would try and be of use to you; I would perhaps help to clear away your doubts, to direct your reading. It is a great pleasure to philosophise. Only yesterday I spent more than an hour and a half discussing the ideas of Plato with a friend. If you wrote to me fully on certain difficult points I would try and answer them by long and full explanations; but you will do better to talk them over with your fellow-students, some of whom have great ability and experience. As to your reading, the most modern works may prove

useful if you use them under proper guidance. Read Descartes and Malbranche; I told you to get Mr. Dugald Stewart's *Moral Philosophy.* You will be sure not to neglect the history of philosophy, without which any other science is of small account.

"These coming holidays, if you have not taken your bachelor's degree, I may be of greater use to you. You are beginning to find out what a hard life a young man has of it. Formerly it was the war, now it is the examinations. Certainly there are seasons of hard work that are as good as a campaign. In 1837, for five months, I worked regularly ten hours a day, *without counting the classes,* and fourteen or fifteen the last month. One has to be prudent so as not to injure one's health by the pressure, but little by little the constitution grows used to it. We become accustomed to a severe active life, and it benefits the temper as much as the intellect.

"Adieu, my dear Charles. My love to our old Marie. I congratulate her on her famous health; they tell me she comes and goes and does wonders."

This *furore* of work, which Ozanam here describes as a thing of the past, continued almost to the same extent in his present life. "Beware," M. Victor le Clerc would say to him during the first year of his *cours;* "moderate the ardour of this *verve* that carries you away; be always an orator, but be more calm; this ardent, impassioned utterance that breaks forth after prolonged meditation, this enthusiasm that you cannot master and that masters you, is a source of uneasiness to your friends. Think of the future; we want you not to curtail any fraction of that future which is due to you; we desire it for you and for ourselves."

His *cours* and his literary work were not the only calls upon his time and energy. He was continually appealed to

from one side and the other to speak in charitable assemblies and at working men's meetings, and he never refused. He presided at a literary conference for many years, and directed the studies of a number of young men who, thanks to his enlightened guidance, have since risen to eminence. It was no vain flourish of rhetoric, but the sincere promptings of his heart, that dictated the following words, addressed one evening to an assembly of young men at the Cercle Catholique: "Every day our friends, our brothers, are killed as soldiers or missionaries on the soil of Africa, or before the palaces of the mandarins. What are we doing meanwhile? Seriously, do you imagine that God has appointed for some to die in the service of civilisation and the Church, while others walk about with their hands in their pockets, or lie down on roses? Oh! gentlemen, you, toilers of science, and you, Christian men of letters, let us prove one and all that we are not cowardly enough to believe in a division which would be an accusation against God who would have made it, and an ignominy on us who would accept it. Let us be ready to prove that we too have our battle-fields, and that, if need be, *we can die on them.*"

He did prove it when the time came. Meantime, the work that he accomplished in his sphere will never be known in this world. God only knows the harvest that others have reaped from his prodigal self-devotion, his knowledge, and that eloquence which so fully illustrated the ideal standard of human speech, described by Fénélon as "the strong and persuasive utterance of a soul nobly inspired." For Ozanam was not merely a teacher in the Sorbonne, he was a teacher of the world, and his influence shone out to the world through the minds and lives of numbers of his contemporaries who did not know that they were reflecting his light.

CHAPTER XVI.

1843-44.

THE year 1843 was one of fruitful activity in the Christian camp. The question of the freedom of the schools, which had subsided after the condemnation of the *Avenir*, had now sprung up again, and was being agitated with greater vehemence than ever. M. de Montalembert had given it a new impulse by his pamphlet on the "Duty of Catholics in the question of free Education," which appeared just as he was inaugurating his career as a political orator from the Tribune of the Chamber of Peers. The *Correspondant*, after many vicissitudes, had emerged from troubled waters, and was starting in a new career, which the names of its contributors promised to render brilliant. Montalembert himself headed the list, and then followed a long array of writers, each well known in his line—MM. de Falloux, Ozanam, Veuillot, de Champagny, Audley, etc.

This same year the Cercle Catholique was founded under the patronage of Monseigneur Affre and many distinguished laymen. Its object was to create a centre for Catholic young men coming to Paris for their studies. A library was formed, and lectures were given on literary and scientific subjects. Ozanam presided over the literary conference, and frequently spoke himself. The Père Lacordaire, who had returned from Italy with heightened prestige and a more matured genius, went there from time to time.

M. de Montalembert, the Père de Ravignan, the Abbé Bautain, whose magnificent conferences at Strasbourg, exposing the danger of separating abstract philosophy from the supernatural lights of revelation, had excited such wide notice, all came in turn to contribute to the instruction and entertainment of the Cercle Catholique.

A strong intellectual current was flowing through the Catholic youth of that time, turning their minds to many vital questions, such as the union of faith and science, the alliance of religion and liberty, the emancipation of the Church from all oppressive responsibility to the State. They were intensely interested in the philosophy of history, and in no portion of it more than that most misunderstood and calumniated of epochs, the Middle Ages. It was no uncommon thing to see one of these young students devoting his leisure to hunting out the authenticity of a breviary, or the solution of some disputed point concerning the notation of music in the thirteenth century. Art and science absorbed them far more than politics.

Ozanam exercised a decisive influence at the Cercle in all artistic questions. Few, indeed, were more competent to interpret the true mission of art, its beautiful faculty of expressing faith and love, of translating the emotions of the soul and the inspirations of genius by outward symbols and material signs, while, at the same time, his erudition was as inexhaustible on all subjects pertaining to art as if he had made this his sole study. It sometimes happened that a young man who had spent a week at the Royal Library wading through venerable folios for information on some obscure point, or about some comparatively unknown painter or sculptor, was astonished to hear the President, to whom he applied for an opinion, sum up, in a few rapid sentences, ten times the information he had obtained in his week's digging.

In this first year of its existence Ozanam made a speech at the Cercle Catholique which was an event. The subject was the literary duties of Christians. It was one in which many leading Catholics of the day felt personally concerned, and it required to be handled with great delicacy, so as not to inflict wounds where the speaker's object was to heal them. The Archbishop of Paris was present, knowing beforehand that Ozanam was to speak, and on what subject, and his presence on this day was intended as a public mark of adhesion. After dilating on the advance of science through faith, the impossibility of acquiring true science without orthodoxy, and the duty of making art the vehicle of faith to humanity, the orator came to speak of the mission of the controversialist. "If," he says, "the rules of Christian controversy have been defined and imposed, it is not permitted to violate them with impunity. In the heat of the fight there is a danger that we do not think of. It is easy to offend God. The violent instincts of human nature, restrained by Christianity, break loose and manifest themselves here. . . . Tertullian, carried away by the African impetuosity of his genius, pursued with the same animosity the false gods and the weak Christians who sacrificed to them; he refused to receive them back to the reconciliation promised to repentance; he would not forgive the Church for pardoning them; and ended by apostatising out of hatred of apostasy. In the quarrels of Arianism the invectives of Lucifer di Cagliari broke forth like thunder; he remained inflexible to the scandal of the Council of Rimini, but when the penitent bishops were taken back into communion with Rome, he separated from her rather than share that communion with them. . . .

"Discussion has other dangers for those whom it is striving to convince. Assuredly when Christians embark on the painful service of controversy, it is with the firm will to serve

God and to gain the hearts of men. We must not therefore compromise the holiness of the cause by the violence of the means. Pascal understood this, and says somewhere, 'The way of God, who does all things gently, is to put religion into the mind by reason and into the heart by grace. . . . Begin by pitying the unbeliever; he is already wretched enough. . . .'" Then, calling to witness the examples of the Fathers of the Church, Ozanam goes on to quote the conduct of St. Basil keeping up a touching correspondence with the sophist Libanius, surrounding his old pagan master with the filial piety of a disciple, and never despairing of him; St. Augustine faithfully pursuing his faint-hearted friend Licentius; then he continues, "We must never begin by despairing of those who *deny*. It is not a question of mortifying, but of convincing them. Refutation is humiliation enough for them, when it is conclusive. Whatever be the disloyalty or the brutality of their attacks, let us show them the example of a generous controversy. Let us beware of exasperating their pride by abuse, and let us not drive them to damn themselves rather than retract. The number of those who *doubt* is greater still. There are noble minds who are led astray by the vices of early education, or by the force of evil example; many of them feel bitterly the misery of their unbelief. We owe them a compassion which need not exclude esteem. It would be politic, even if it were not just, not to thrust them back into the lessening crowd of impious unbelievers, to distinguish their cause, and not to confound strangers with enemies. . . . There are some who, after having waited a little while for these tardy ones, lose patience, and grow irritated with their slowness. Let us not lose patience; God is patient because He is eternal: so likewise are Christians."

It is hard to see how words so full of the wisdom of

Christian charity should have provoked anger and resentment, and drawn down on the speaker that "abuse" from which he so gently adjures them to refrain towards their enemies. Yet so it was. A fierce article on this portion of the speech appeared next morning in the *Univers.*

The following letter gives us Ozanam's estimate of the attack:—

"I seize a moment of leisure to send you these few lines with the *Bulletin du Cercle Catholique,* in which you will find a speech by the present writer on the *Literary Duties of Christians,*[1] and the Archbishop's allocution in answer to it. I was sending it about to our friends also, by way of justification against a violent attack of the *Univers.* I allude to an article which appeared on the Feast of the Ascension, entitled *Moderation and Zeal,* in which I was stigmatised as a deserter from the Catholic struggle. It was a reply of that journal's to my speech, not a word of which was addressed to it. They have apologised to me; but I had reason to fear that my friends at Lyons were somewhat alarmed about me, and this is why I send you the documents connected with the whole affair. You will see therein that the Cercle Catholique invited me to speak at an important meeting where Monseigneur Affre presided. In accepting this honour, I consulted his Grace beforehand, and he specially entreated me to dwell upon certain questions concerning which he appeared glad to have an opportunity of publicly explaining himself. The greater portion of the clergy of Paris highly disapprove of the passion and violence by which certain newspapers and pamphlets are compromising the cause of the Church. The entire assembly applauded my remarks, and those which the Archbishop added to them consoled and fortified the general opinion. A few days afterwards a speech of M. de Carné's,

[1] See *Complete Works of Ozanam,* vol. vii. p. 147.

in the same strain, induced the Chamber of Deputies to send up the petitions to the Minister. Earnest thought and serious discussion will end, thank God, by carrying the day against these polemics of abuse and fury, which are more suited to our enemies than to us.

"You must not suppose, however, that in the difficulties of our present position we have hard words for none but the imprudent champions of truth. I am doing my best, and that is but little, in concert with M. Lenormant, M. Coeur, and a few others, to maintain a vigorous struggle against the doctrines of the Professors of the College of France. While MM. Michelet and Quinet were attacking Christianity itself under the name of Jesuitism, I tried in three consecutive lectures to defend the papacy, monks, and monastic obedience. I did this in presence of a very large audience, who were stamping and hissing somewhere else the day before; and yet I met with no interruption or disturbance, and in continuing the literary history of Italy, that is to say, of one of the most Christian countries that exist under the sun, I met at every step, and I shall take every opportunity of pointing out in the course of my lectures, the benefits and the prodigies of the Church.

"Help me by your prayers; ask for me the spirit of *strength* and *knowledge*, which the whole of Christendom is imploring on bended knees during these Whitsuntide solemnities."

"Of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that which we need most is *strength*," he says elsewhere to M. Foisset; "and we know so little what it means, that many fancy they have got it, because they have violence and passion, which are, on the contrary, like all that is convulsive, proofs of uneasiness and weakness."

This spirit of strength was, above all, desirable at a crisis when angry discussion tended to produce that dissen-

sion which is the most fatal element of weakness. "You want to know if the Catholics in Paris are united," he says; "I believe they were never more united as to the end, but never more divided as to the means. It is easy for you to follow from a distance the movements and divisions of the fighting army. . . . Amongst the foremost in the battle you will perceive the *enfans perdus* of the *Univers*, whom everybody disowns, either because of its violence or its want of talent."

Ozanam's zeal was, indeed, held in check by a degree of prudence and far-seeing sagacity rare in one so inexperienced.

"My fear always is," he writes, "that the Catholic questions may have been raised too soon, and before our number, our influence, and our works have put us in a position to maintain the struggle. I am frightened lest laymen without *grace d'état*, without authority, may have incurred the fearful responsibility of drawing the Church of France into a crisis whose issue it is impossible to foresee. But being once inevitably drawn into it, and public opinion being taken hold of, when the exaggeration, the violence, and the gross ignorance of certain writers had compromised the Catholic interests of which they made themselves the organs, I rejoiced to see the controversy lifted out of this wretched skirmishing, and replaced on its proper level by M. de Montalembert, in the first instance, and after him by M. de Carné, M. de Vatiménil, Père de Ravignan, and our venerable prelates, notably the Archbishops of Paris and Lyons. These are the true representatives of our rights, the ones we run no risk of ever having to disown. Here it is no longer a quarrel of *pedagogues* and *beadles;* it is not even a discussion between the colleges and the little seminaries: it is the grand question of the relations between Church and State; the Priesthood and

the Empire, which is never terminated, but reappears at all the most eventful epochs of history; in the age of the Fathers, the age of the Crusades, the age of Louis XIV., the age of Napoleon. It is being stirred up now between statesmen and churchmen, and may compel the former to study religion, and the latter to practise liberty; it may completely detach the clergy from those traditions of absolutism to which they still cling; it may stir the country deeply; it is right that a great people should be occupied with great things.

"We must not, however, blind ourselves to the peril. Religious ignorance is so complete, and prejudice so strong, and we have so few men who are capable of winning over public opinion to our side! Who knows? this premature effort may give rise to a terrible reaction, may provoke an irruption of Voltairianism, and the faith of a great number may perish! But at the point that things have now reached it behoves us to stifle these fears, and to hold on together, united and resolved to conquer or die with honour. Last year it was still possible to postpone the battle, but now any attempt at temporisation would only serve to divide our forces; we must follow the inevitable course of men and things, and trust to God who is leading it; holding ourselves ready for every sacrifice, with the certainty that if they do not avail for the success of the struggle now they will have their prize sooner or later in this world or the next; remembering that when we are most inclined to think our efforts, our time, and our trouble, lost, Providence may be drawing from them a far greater good than we dream of."

While Ozanam was carrying on the warfare in his own field he was bravely seconded by M. Lenormant, who occupied the chair of M. Guizot, as assistant Professor of History.

The conquest of this distinguished man to Christianity was of recent date. For three years he had been undergoing a fierce inward struggle, whose final issue was awaited with intense interest by many who were watching the event with widely divergent sympathies. There are few things more impressive and exciting than the spectacle of a human conscience wrestling with itself, and, with the self-forgetting simplicity of real earnestness, admitting others to witness the struggle, casting aside false shame, making no secret of its doubts, its faltering modification of convictions, and the gradual ingress of light, until at last the fulness of truth illuminates the darkness, and the triumph of faith is complete. M. Lenormant had been affording this wonderful spectacle to all who had attended his *cours* for the last three years. He had come before them as a sceptic, and had addressed them as such; but the moment his disbelief was shaken his conscience was too honest to go on feigning a tone of negative conviction he no longer felt; he did not hide that his philosophical creed was staggered, he dissembled neither his irresolution nor his own surprise at it. At last a day came when the battle was over, and victory declared itself on the side of faith. The event was greeted by the young population of the Sorbonne with mingled delight and indignation. But the indignation largely predominated. M. Lenormant at once followed up his conversion to Christianity by publicly vindicating and exalting what he had formerly denounced, and denouncing what he had exalted.

This conduct, as was to be expected, provoked general hostility amongst the anti-Christian majority, and the *cours* of the *savan*, lately so popular, became the scene of hostile and riotous demonstrations. The same intolerant apostles of tolerance were clamouring furiously at the *cours* of M. Dupanloup, where they would not allow the Professor to

speak according to his conscience of Voltaire, the man who, of all others, had used the most reckless licence in speaking of men and things. Older and cooler heads were inciting and directing these young fanatics in their proceedings. MM. Michelet and Quinet resented Lenormant's conversion as a personal insult, although "the convert of the Sorbonne," as they derisively termed him, had scrupulously avoided attacking, or even indirectly refuting, the diatribes of the too revolutionary tribunes of the Collége de France; they however determined to leave nothing undone to silence him, and their influence gave a serious colour to a movement which otherwise might have passed off as a mere college ebullition. Ozanam saw at once the gravity of the situation. He made a point of attending M. Lenormant's lectures whenever he could, and his sagacity soon took in the drift and motive of the turbulent scenes that were enacted there. "I can assure you," he says to Lallier, "it is no mere uprising of the schools, no fanatical onset of a troop of hot-headed boys. It is a great deal more, and a great deal less. It is an affair got up without passion, but with perfidious cunning, in the *bureaux* of a few revolutionary newspapers, in order to maintain the irreligious portion of the public in the kind of fever it has been in these last few years, and also to create new difficulties in the way of the Government. As these people have all the obstinacy of a *parti pris*, and as the Government is as weak as it always is when called upon to take the part of religion, there is reason to fear the rows will be repeated, and though there be only, like the last time, sixty rioters, if they return to the charge ten times they will end by getting the *cours* shut up. At any rate, it will not be done without energetic protestations; for the Catholic youth have shown more than usual firmness in this matter, which will at least

have the effect of drawing their ranks closer and strengthening them for the contest.

"But you can imagine what a grief it is to me to see a *cours* so able and so salutary in its doctrines imperilled by such miserable intrigues, and betrayed by those whose duty it is to defend, there as elsewhere, the cause of public order.

"Alas! my dear friend, what an amount of harm is done in the world through the inconsistency and faint-heartedness of good people! For my part, I shall do my best to prevent my cause being separated from that of Lenormant; so long as his lectures are disturbed I shall continue to attend them, and use all my influence with a certain number of young men to recruit the audience. If you were here you would help us by your presence and your advice. Sustain us at least in the distance by your prayers. It is on Thursday the 8th that the *cours* is to be resumed."

It was as Ozanam feared. The recommencing of the lectures was the signal for the renewal of the hostile demonstrations. M. Lenormant's appearance was greeted with hisses and yells and unseemly manifestations of dislike. He began to speak, but his voice was drowned in hootings and blasphemous cries. Ozanam, who was present, unable to contain his indignation, leaped up beside the lecturer, and stood for a moment surveying the tumult with proud defiance. The courageous action drew forth an instantaneous salvo of applause; but Ozanam, with a scornful gesture, commanded silence, and proceeded to tell the assembly what he thought of their behaviour, and what value he set on their plaudits; he spoke with a fiery vehemence that startled all into attention; he adjured them in the name of liberty, which they so loudly invoked, to respect liberty in others, and to allow every man the free-

dom of his conscience. The effect of the harangue was magical; the tumult ceased, and M. Lenormant continued, or rather began, his lecture, and finished it without interruption. The next day, however, the *cours* was closed by order of the Government; authority thus yielding to violence, where by a little firmness it might so easily have taken the upper hand, and constituted itself the guardian of social peace and the bulwark of social principles.

This cowardly and cruel precedent did not daunt Ozanam, or induce him to abate one iota of his independence; he continued his lectures without mitigating in the slightest degree the out-and-out Christian tone of his teaching. The boldness of this conduct, while it heightened his prestige with his own party, increased his general popularity. His name became a power in its sphere, and was cited everywhere as an example of the energy and growing strength of the Catholics.

It once happened, during the noisy days of the Lenormant riots, when the learned Sorbonne was transformed into a battle-field, that some person, meaning to be witty, scratched out the words "littérature étrangère" after Ozanam's name on the door, and wrote over them, "théologie." He was informed of it as he was entering the hall. He said nothing until he had finished his lecture, and then, as he was about to descend from his chair, he observed, in a tone of great dignity, "I have not the *honour* to be a theologian, gentlemen, but I have the happiness to believe, and the ambition to place my whole soul with all my might at the service of truth."

The courageous profession of faith was greeted by loud and general cheers.

It was in truth a position to the full as perilous as it was glorious which he now occupied, and one which demanded no ordinary combination of wisdom, tact, and

courage, in order to reconcile personal dignity and interest with the stern dictates of principle. For he had become the standard-bearer of the Christian cause in the sphere where he had been the first to introduce it, and he was now the central object of attack from its enemies. The fate of his colleague was a warning whose significance he could not misunderstand. His own popularity might seem to offer a guarantee for his safety; but the firmest popularity is at best but a throne built upon sand, which a sudden gust of wind in the shape of a revulsion of public feeling may upset at a moment's warning. If he opened a direct attack on the Sorbonne, it was tantamount to giving up his chair; and his chair was his bread, that blessed *panem quotidianum* which represents peace of mind, the one earthly ambition Ozanam had ever deliberately cherished. And now he was not alone, he had a wife and child to guard it for. Moreover, to resign would be to desert his post, and leave the field open on every side to the enemy.

The old Sorbonne, too, claimed some allegiance from him as from a favourite son, on whose young head she had lavished high honours prematurely; he was the Benjamin of the grey old Alma Mater, and his heart went out to her with dutiful affection. All the manliness and loyalty of his nature recoiled from striking her. His position was a Gordian knot which seemingly nothing but a fatal stroke could sever, fatal whichever way it fell. Seemingly, but not in reality. Père Lacordaire, whose judgment on Ozanam's conduct throughout this critical time may be taken as conclusive, observes,[1] "It is seldom that in the most delicate position, when everything seems impossible, there is not some point which reconciles all things, just as in God attributes which look most dissimilar meet

[1] *Œuvres du P. Lacordaire—Ozanam*, vol. v. p. 404.

somewhere in the harmony of a perfect unity. Ozanam retained his professorship; it was his post in the danger. He did not directly attack the body to which he belonged; this was his duty as a colleague, and he was bound to it in gratitude. But he continued in the most complete and avowed solidarity with us; I mean, though I have no right to count myself amongst them, with those who were defending with all their heart the sacred cause of freedom of education. No tie that bound him to chiefs or soldiers was loosened. He took his part in all the meetings, all the works, all the inspirations of the time, and what he did not officially enunciate in his chair, or in his writings, his influence proclaimed with a boldness that was more than a confession. Nor did a shadow of mistrust or coldness ever cast a cloud for one moment on the high rank that he occupied amongst us; he preserved undiminished the affection of the Catholics, the esteem of the body to which he belonged, and outside these two camps the sympathy of that floating, fitful crowd, the public, which sooner or later decides all things."

Ozanam's great and universal popularity is a matter of surprise to many who hear of it only from a distance, and cannot penetrate its secret. It is difficult to appreciate this fragile possession without being apparently guilty of exaggerated and dubious estimates.

Popularity, as it is vulgarly understood, is a worthless thing, but in its true and higher sense it is a noble privilege. To be popular means to be loved not by a few, but by many, by the multitude; it is the empire of one soul over the souls of numbers, an empire which, if rightly used, represents the noblest power any mortal hand can wield. It seldom falls to the hand that tries to clutch it;—it may come for a moment, gilding life like a flitting sunbeam, but it quickly passes away, leaving a chiller darkness

behind. Ozanam never courted popularity; perhaps no man holding a public post ever sought it less. When it found him out, he only valued it inasmuch as it helped him to make popular the doctrines that he taught. This very obliteration of self no doubt drew the public favour to him unconsciously. Then his faith was in itself a power. Men delight in the sight of enthusiasm and strong conviction, even when they do not share them; a faith of any sort is a power; sceptics, who do not believe in belief, envy those who do. A man who represents the most unpopular conviction, who serves it and stands by it through thick and thin, is sure to gain influence in the long-run; undying devotion to a cause eventually conquers the respect of its enemies, though it may not make its champion popular. The qualities of the man himself must do this. He must have a heart, or he must pass for having one. Ozanam was essentially a man of heart. His genius excited admiration, his piety commanded respect, but it was his kindness that made him loved. Lacordaire says that he had a charm, "which, added to his other gifts, completed in his person the artisan of a predestined enchantment. He was gentle to all men, and just towards error."

Just towards error! What a gospel of charity is compressed into the words! Ozanam denied to no man freedom of thought, the right to differ from him; moreover, he believed all his life that the majority of sceptics were ready to embrace truth could they only be induced to hear it explained. This is why he strove so humbly to make his own exposition of it attractive and persuasive. He had intense pity for unbelievers, looking upon them not as wilfully blind, or as criminal, but as brothers who, for some unknown cause, had been denied that blessed inheritance of faith which illuminated his own life, and the sense of gratitude and of his own unworthiness made him merciful.

His extraordinary indulgence towards error was sometimes a stumbling-block to his friends when they were all young together, but there is not one of them now, who on looking back does not recognise that Ozanam's faith was all the more powerful for being so sweetly tempered by charity. To youth especially his tolerance was almost boundless; yet no one will dare to say that there was the faintest touch of cowardice or false liberality in this condescension towards intellectual error. "It was," as M. Ampère very justly observes, "a largeness of view which taught him to recognise sympathies outside the camp where he was fighting." It was also a deep reverence for souls, which taught him to respect the mysterious relationship between God and His creatures—a tender humility which forbade him to sit in judgment on others, or to quench the smoking flax.

He frequently pointed to M. Lenormant as an example of the triumph of grace in a soul that was loyal in its intention to serve the truth even while actively attacking it, and he would warn his Catholic friends of the danger of repelling others in similar circumstances by harshness and unjust judgments. This terror of alienating a seeker after truth made him extremely gentle in dealing with an adversary. He always said that a man who began to examine religious doctrine should be treated with respect, because the moment a soul set out to seek God—that is to say truth, —he was on the road towards Him. He resented bitterness in religious discussion as an act of treason to the faith, whose chief commandment is, "That ye love one another." No controversial triumph was worth anything in his eyes, if it was purchased at the cost of charity, or a violation of "the peace of love." In the eleven volumes which he has left us, and which deal with a variety of controversial subjects, his lash is always raised against falsehood, injustice,

and vice, but there is not one line that is cruel or harsh to individuals. There is nowhere the least trace of pique, or revenge, or anger; he holds the sceptre of truth with a steady hand, but never strikes with it except at falsehood. He pleads far more than he condemns, and his denunciations breathe more compassion than wrath.

The same large spirit of universal charity presided over his almsgiving and all his dealings with the poor. He made no invidious distinctions as to creed. Wherever there was nakedness to be clothed, tears to be wiped away, a soul to be comforted, he recognised a claim and answered it. The Abbé Perreyve tells a touching anecdote, which proves this better than a volume of description. A Protestant congregation in Paris collected a sum of money for charitable purposes, and gave it to their clergyman, who, having no pressing cases of distress at the moment, was embarrassed as to how he should best apply it. He knew Ozanam by reputation, and the idea occurred to him that he would be the likeliest person to know how to employ the money, so, acting on the generous inspiration, he took it to him and requested him to use it according to his judgment. We can fancy how touched Frederic's heart was by the delicate proof of confidence. He carried the offering the same evening to a conference of St. Vincent de Paul, and related the incident with an emotion which spread to all present. One member, however, rose, and, after praising warmly the disinterested charity of their Protestant benefactor, suggested that the money should be first applied to relieving the Catholic poor, who were more numerous, and then that the surplus should be given to some indigent Protestant families. "As he proceeded," says the Abbé Perreyve, "I saw Ozanam's features contracting impatiently, and I guessed, by the tremulous movement of his hand, as he drew it nervously through his long hair, that we were about to witness one

of those explosions which he could not control. 'Gentlemen,' he said, starting to his feet when the speaker had finished, 'if this proposal had the misfortune to prevail, if it be not distinctly understood that our members succour the poor without reference to creed or country, I shall this moment return to the Protestants the alms they have intrusted to me, and I shall say, Take it back; we are not worthy of your confidence!'"

We are not much surprised when the Abbé adds, "They did not put it to the vote."

But if he was intolerant of intolerance, Ozanam had an unmitigated, almost violent, horror of evil in itself. The sight of vice or falsehood excited him as a personal wrong excites most of us. He resented it with a fierceness very foreign to his gentle nature; and yet with all this, his pity for the offender never failed. "Often," says the Abbé Perreyve, "on hearing any one say of a person whose life was steeped in wickedness, 'He is a lost man!' Ozanam would remark, 'After all, if it be true that God has His own secret, as I believe, we may rest assured it is a secret of mercy.'"

The service of the poor occupies such a prominent position in Ozanam's life that it becomes of interest to know how he performed it. It was essentially a service of love. His manner towards the poor was considerate and deferential as towards his equals. He invariably took off his hat on entering their poor abodes, greeting them with his courteous formula, "I am your servant." He never preached to them; after giving whatever he had to give he would sit and chat on any subject likely to cheer or interest them. When they came to see him they were not kept in the hall, but were shown into his study, where he would draw forward a comfortable chair, and behave in every way as towards visitors whom he was glad to honour.

At Christmas he always took them some little present, a book, a picture, or some trifle he knew they fancied. One New Year's Eve he was telling his wife about a poor family who had known better days, but were now reduced to such shifts that they had been compelled to pledge a handsome chest of drawers, the last remnant that remained to them of former comfort; he said he was greatly tempted to go and redeem it and send it to them for their New Year's gift. His Amélie was seldom inclined to check his generous impulses, but she felt it right to show certain prudential reasons for his not following this one. He saw the force of them, and yielded. The day was spent pleasantly in paying and receiving friendly and official visits, according to the custom of Paris; but when evening came, and his little girl was showing him the profusion of toys and *bon-bons* that had poured in on her since morning, he turned away with a sigh, and sat silent and absent. Madame Ozanam inquired anxiously if anything had occurred to distress him; he confessed that the thought of those poor people without their chest of drawers was weighing on him, and the sight of all this money wasted on Marie's pleasure smote him like a reproach. Amélie entreated him to go and satisfy the prompting of his heart; he hurried out, and in a short time returned radiantly happy.

It was noticed by some of his friends that, after the general Communion at Notre Dame on Holy Thursday, Ozanam, instead of going straight home to his breakfast, disappeared in another direction. They watched him, and found that he went first to the baker's, and then to a certain number of poor families, where he distributed loaves. He frequently ended his thanksgiving by an act of charity of this sort.

Seldom is his eloquence more tenderly inspired than when pleading the cause of the poor. He has left some

pages on Almsgiving, its duties and joys and dangers, which are amongst his finest. Speaking of the help which honours and that which humbles those who receive it, he says, "Help is humiliating when it appeals to men from below, taking heed of their material wants only, paying no attention but to those of the flesh, to the cry of hunger and cold, to what excites pity, to what one succours even in the beasts. It humiliates when there is no reciprocity, when you give the poor man nothing but bread, or clothes, or a bundle of straw, what, in fact, there is no likelihood of his ever giving you in return. . . . But it honours when it appeals to him from above, when it occupies itself with his soul, his religious, moral, and political education, with all that emancipates him from his passions and from a portion of his wants, with those things that make him free, and may make him great. Help honours when, to the bread that nourishes, it adds the visit that consoles, the advice that enlightens, the friendly shake of the hand that lifts up the sinking courage, when it treats the poor man with respect, not only as an equal but as a superior, since he is suffering what perhaps we are incapable of suffering, since he is the messenger of God to us, sent to prove our justice and our charity, and to save us by our works.

"Help then becomes honourable, because it may become mutual, because every man who gives a kind word, a good advice, a consolation to-day, may to-morrow stand himself in need of a kind word, an advice, or a consolation, because the hand that you clasp clasps yours in return, because that indigent family whom you love loves you in return, and will have largely acquitted themselves towards you when the old man, the mother, the little children shall have prayed for you."[1] "Do you suppose you pay the priest to whom the State gives a hundred crowns[2] a year to be

[1] *Mélanges*, i. p. 292.

[2] 300 francs.

the father, the schoolmaster, the comforter of the poor village lost in the mountains? or the soldier who gets five sous a day to die under the flag? Why, the soldier gives the alms of his blood to the country, and the priest that of his words, his thoughts, his heart, that will never know the fireside joys. And the country does neither the injustice to think that it pays them; it gives them an alms that will enable them to resume to-morrow the lowly self-devotion of to-day, to return to the bedside of the plague-stricken, or under the fire of the Bedouins. . . . Don't tell me, then, that I humiliate the poor man when I treat him as I treat the priest who blesses and the soldier who dies for me. Alms are the retribution of services that have no salary. . . . In our eyes the man who suffers serves God, and, consequently, serves society like him who prays; he performs a ministry of expiation, a sacrifice whose merits rebound on us; and we trust less for our safety to the lightning-conductor above our house-tops than to the prayer of the poor woman and her little children who are sleeping on a truss of straw in the garret under our roof. And let no one say that in treating poverty as a priesthood we aim at perpetuating it: the same authority which tells us that we shall always have the poor amongst us, is the same that commands to do all we can that there may cease to be any. . . . When you dread so much to lay an *obligation* on him who accepts your alms, I fear it is because you have never experienced the obligation it confers on him who gives. Those who know the road to the poor man's house, whose feet have swept the dust from his stairs, never knock at his door without a sentiment of respect. They know that in accepting bread from their hand, as he takes the light from God, the poor man honours them; they know that the theatre and every other place of amusement can be paid for, but that nothing

in this world can pay for two tears of joy in the eyes of a poor mother, nor the grasp of an honest man's hand, when one has enabled him to wait till he gets work. We are all of us subject, unfortunately, to movements of *brusquerie* and haughtiness towards our inferiors; but there are few men so wanting in delicacy as to speak harshly to the poor man whom they have relieved, to forget that an alms commits the donor, and closes his lips for ever to anything that might seem like a reproach to the recipient."[1]

Ozanam was far, however, from advocating that indiscriminate almsgiving which unwisely benevolent persons are apt to indulge in. "A severe inquisition should search out hidden distress, interrogate sorrows that do not cry out, visit the attic where the sick man suffers in silence, and penetrate even into the prison where the unfortunate find no echo to bear the voice of their anguish to the outer world."[2] This prudent theory did not prevent his being sometimes deceived in practice. There was an Italian whom he had assisted for a long time, and finally procured a situation for in a house of business; the man betrayed the confidence of his employers, and having again fallen into great distress, he came back for help to his former protector, who, justly incensed at his behaviour, ordered him away, and bade him never come near him again. No sooner, however, had the man left the house than Ozanam was smitten with remorse; he said to himself that it was "wrong to reduce any one to despair, that one had no right to refuse a mouthful of bread to the vilest scoundrel, that he himself would one day want God not to be inexorable towards him, as he had just been towards a fellow-creature redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ."

Unable to bear the thought, he seized his hat and rushed

[1] *De l'Aumône*, vid. *Mélanges*, i. p. 398.
[2] *Civilisation au 5me siècle*, i. 75.

out in pursuit of the Italian, whom he overtook in the gardens of the Luxembourg.

We have seen how constantly he entreated those who gave to enhance the value of their benefits by bestowing them with their own hand, instead of through agents and valets. "How can the recipients of this sort of bounty feel grateful for it, as they would be if it were differently bestowed?" he would urge. "Who ever saw any person moved to tears by the regularity with which the street-fountains flow every morning, or the gas is lighted for them every evening?"

He had great order in his almsgiving. The budget of his charities was regulated beforehand every year as strictly as any of his personal expenses, and rose in proportion to the increase of his means; he advised all his friends to adopt his plan, and thus save themselves the annoyance of never knowing exactly how they stood with regard to the fulfilment of the duty, and from saying sometimes "I cannot afford it," without being sure whether they really can or not. It would be impossible to convey in words an adequate idea of the sweetness, the inimitable grace with which he accompanied his own necessarily limited donations. Père Lacordaire's description may be applied to him with truth: "There is a way of giving, a charm that disguises the benefit, a transparency that lets you look into the heart and love it, a something gentle, simple, a kindly anticipation that draws the whole being, and makes man prefer the spectacle of kindness to that even of genius."

CHAPTER XVII.

1844-5.

OZANAM, on coming to Paris, had settled in a small apartment in the Rue de Fleurus overlooking the gardens of the old Medicean Palace, within a few minutes' walk of the Sorbonne. The house was very simple, but full of household gods that beautified it; there were venerable old mahogany gods, that spoke to him of his kindred in remote times, and blessed while they served him; there were cherished little gods that reminded him of his childhood; there were bright gods of hope and expectation, tender Madonnas, and laurel-crowned poets, that smiled with a promise while they beckoned onward and upward. His young wife was there the queen of the little Parnassus, a living centre to the dumb divinities around.

They had brought Gui-gui with them. The old Lyonnese servant was a pillar of strength in the little household. She had now been nearly seventy years in the service of the Ozanam family, having entered as a tiny maiden in attendance on the cocks and hens, until she gradually worked her way up to the high functions of cook, a sceptre which she now held and exercised with jealous sway. Her fabulous economy was only equalled by her devotion to her master. Every member of the family consulted her on all important occasions, and she gave her opinion with rare good sense; needless to say that, as time went by, she gave it sometimes without wait-

ing to be asked. Gui-gui was a staunch conservative, and held on like grim death to the customs of her youth; she wore the picturesque peasant dress of her native village, unmodified by Parisian fashions, and mounted guard over the family traditions with the stern remonstrance, "Your grandmother did this; your great-grandfather did so-and-so." Her spare moments were spent saying never-ending rosaries for the souls of the departed masters, whose children she looked upon as her own, and whose babies she sang to sleep with the same songs that had lulled four generations of the race.

Ozanam was thoroughly happy, in full swing of literary work, at rest for the present, and fairly secure for the future, when an event occurred which suddenly changed the whole aspect of his life; this was M. Fauriel's death. He had been an invalid for years, yet the end was as great a surprise as if it had overtaken him in rude health.

TO M. FOISSET.

"*July* 29, 1844.

"... Yes, the death of M. Fauriel came on me like a thunderbolt. I had in him a kind patron and an enlightened counsellor, whose interest insured me, as his substitute, the perpetual possession of a chair which his infirm health no longer permitted him to occupy. His friendship was my security. . . Now, what are they going to do with me? God alone knows. After four years of a professorship, whose success has surpassed all my hopes, to which I sacrificed everything, even in some degree my health, having been besides on the best of terms with everybody, and now that I hold no title from the University, outside the Faculty, it is hard to suppose that they would coolly dismiss me, and place another Professor in the chair I have been filling. The Faculty is of

this opinion, and the majority of the members are disposed to present me first on the list to the Minister, which would at once settle my nomination; only they think it fit, out of respect to the memory of M. Fauriel, to wait for the re-opening of the schools. A small minority, however, opposes these kind intentions, insists on my age—thirty-one,—my want of scientific titles, and my recent entrance into the University, and suggests that they should leave me time to win my spurs by prolonging the vacancy, and just allow me to hold the professorship next year as *chargé de cours;* that is to say, on a precarious title.

"I am quite alive to the perils of a provisional position in a time of strife like the present, when the kindly dispositions of public feeling may change so quickly. All my efforts therefore are brought to bear on this point. Several friends are seconding me by active steps; but all may help me by their prayers. All I ask of God is that He will take the delicate matter into His own hands, so that I may neither betray the duties of my state by imprudence, nor my honour as a Christian by pusillanimity.

"After all, it may be best for my salvation that I should not succeed; and in that case, all I desire is firmness, resignation, and peace of heart; to be resigned to everything, even to the precarious, even to uncertainty, which is perhaps the most painful of all, but which we should accustom ourselves to, since God has placed it everywhere, in life, in death, in health, in fortune, and that He saw fit to let us live,—we who so desire to be certain of our revenues, our projects, our successes,—in the most terrible of all doubts, 'whether we are worthy of love in His eyes.'

"These sentiments, that I am trying hard to penetrate myself with for these last fifteen days, are fortunately

firmly enthroned in the heart of my wife, who for my greater trial is absent from me at this painful crisis. I had to remain here in the breach, and I shall of course have to remain on through all the holidays."

The trial was prolonged beyond the holidays. Ozanam continued in the same uncertainty as to his fate until the close of November, when he was nominated Professor at the Sorbonne for life, in the vacant place of M. Fauriel, and with the increased salary belonging to the position. M. Ampère is the first to whom he sends the good tidings :—

TO AMPÈRE.

"23*d November* 1844.

"I come to announce the great news to you. At last, on Saturday at two o'clock, the Minister of Public Instruction signed my nomination. The presentation of the Academical Council had already been unanimous, like that of the Faculty. The Royal Council had given its opinion similarly on Friday ; it seemed therefore as if nothing remained to be done but to sign ; and yet, to justify what you said so truly about the terrors of the last moment, we were informed that the Minister would not terminate the matter, but ordered the paper for the classes to be posted up with a blank after my name, so as to give him further time for reflection. M. le Clerc was obliged to exercise no ordinary zeal and firmness in order literally to compel the signature. But at last the thing was done, and was this morning executed by my taking the oath before the Dean ; it is published to-day in all the newspapers, and borne by these organs of publicity to my friends in the four corners of France. We were looking forward to this conclusion certainly as a great happiness, and yet I must confess that our joy has been far greater than we anticipated. It is

almost humiliating to be so much moved by a temporal advantage; but at the first moment, this end of all our fears and anxieties, the new-found security, the sense of peace, overcame Amélie and myself more than I dare to say.

"I was so happy to see this dear life, superadded to my own, henceforth sheltered, as far as it humanly can be, from those cares and vicissitudes which wear out the noblest hearts; to see an honourable position, and one worthy of her, secured to her, and at the same time to feel myself in conditions of independence which will permit me to do my duty without incurring mortifying suspicions and threatening interpretations! Then the congratulations of our friends followed quickly on these first emotions, and added to their sweetness, till we can scarcely tell what has given us most pleasure, our own success, or the pleasure it has given so many kind, excellent, and devoted persons.

"I knew well already, God having taught it me by experience, that we need our friends in sorrow, but I had yet to learn how much we want them in happiness. Oh! we see it now well enough by the void which your absence causes us, and this is why I felt I must tell you, as to a brother at full length—the way you like it—all that we felt on this great occasion. You must enjoy your work a little, you who, after God, are the author of all this prosperity; you who welcomed me as a brother into the house of your good and glorious father, who started me on the road, who led me from trial to trial, step by step, to this chair, where I am now seated, only because the one man, who is really worthy to fill it, refuses it.

"How beautiful are the designs of Providence when we see them as a whole and in the distance! . . ."

"We see in this event," he writes to M. Foisset, "a

merciful dispensation of Providence to point out to me how I am to serve God in this world, to render my duties easy to me, because I am weak, and to prepare me, by a moment of prosperity, for the trials of the future. How indeed can we do otherwise than recognise the Divine intervention in an evênt of which we now know all the vicissitudes, the obstacles that have crossed it, and the unlikely coincidences that we had to overcome. We are really less astonished at the result than at the manner in which it has been brought about, the unanimous support which I obtained successively in the Royal Council, in the Faculty, in the Academical Council, and this without their exacting from me a single step in advance, the least concession or reserve; without hinting, as they might have done, that I should exercise more *prudence* in my lectures; without so much as asking me to write, as it is customary to do, a letter, presenting myself as a candidate, lest they should seem to be imposing any conditions on me. It is in fact impossible to push kindness and delicacy further than the Dean of the Faculty has done. But what crowns my satisfaction is the way our numerous friends have shared it; one would think it was a personal success for them all; and so it is, for we have no manner of doubt that their prayers helped on our success, just as we count on them now to enable us to prove grateful and worthy of it."

Ozanam's youth had been a serious obstacle in his way. M. Guizot, the youngest Professor the University had yet admitted, was seven-and-thirty when he was nominated, and Ozanam was five years younger. This precedent made his success the more striking. The pupils of the Collége Stanislas were the only portion of his friends who did not rejoice at it; they were proud of his triumph, but it was to cost them dear. No Professor of the University was

allowed to give lessons in any minor college, consequently their master's new honours involved their losing him. Young as the boys were, they had realised the privilege of his teaching, and occasionally expressed this fact to him in verses, thanking their "guide savant et aimable" for leaving the learned crowd outside in favour of the humble audience of a schoolroom. One of these affectionate effusions assures him—

> "Votre cœur respirant du fardeau de la gloire,
> Y trouvera du moins des cœurs reconnaissants."

In their despair at losing him, they wrote to the Minister, M. Villemain, imploring him to suspend the prohibition in their favour, and allow their dear master to remain with them. They tried to enlist Ozanam himself on their side, and wrote him a letter, which is too characteristic to be omitted :—

"MONSIEUR,—We cannot find words to express to you the painful surprise with which we received yesterday the news of the misfortune which threatens us. Those who have only known you a few months, and those who, after assisting a whole year at your lectures, earnestly hoped to enjoy them much longer, are all equally afflicted, and I have received the sad mission of expressing to you this universal sorrow. Still all hope is not perhaps over, and however unworthy we may be of occupying so precious a time as yours, *we dare entreat you to take our cause into your own hands, and to preserve to us, if possible, the master whom we have most loved.*"

Their efforts proved unavailing. M. Villemain did not relent, but Ozanam was touched to the heart by this letter, which he carefully preserved. Yet with all his kindness they had not found him an easy-going master. On the contrary he was, as a Professor, exceptionally severe. As an examiner he gave no quarter. He so mistrusted his

natural tendency to indulgence, that conscientiousness drove him into the opposite extreme, and once in his official capacity of judge he was impartial almost to hardness, more especially towards candidates in whom he took a personal interest. There is a story told of a young *protégé* whom he had taken infinite pains to prepare for his examinations, and who, when the day of ordeal came, was within an ace of being dismissed, owing to the merciless rigour of Ozanam's interrogations. From this time forth the candidates rather feared than sought a friendly recommendation to him, saying that it only doubled the chance of failure. But his greatest severity was displayed towards ecclesiastical students. One day a young seminarist called on him to inquire into the reasons of his failure at the recent examinations. Ozanam received him with the utmost kindness, and pointed out to him in detail the various flaws of his version, then suddenly changing his tone, and assuming a severe countenance, he said, "Your very dress, Monsieur, compels us to be more exacting. When one has the honour to wear the livery of the priesthood, one should not lightly expose it to a similar disgrace."

M. Soulacroix was named Chef de Division in the Ministry of Public Instruction in the spring of the following year (1845), a circumstance which, by drawing his wife's family closer to him, was a source of sincere rejoicing to Ozanam. He continued to work arduously at his pen, but complains much of the inadequate results. "I am dying with impatience to resume my researches on Germany, which were beginning to interest me intensely just as I had to interrupt them," he says to M. Foisset. "But really I despair of ever doing anything considerable, because of my slowness and my facility for losing time. Ah! if I only had the activity that I see in you, in my father-in-law, and

that I used to see in my father, but which is becoming rare, and seems as if it would disappear altogether. It strikes me that the great secret of education now-a-days should be to destroy this tendency of the mind to wandering. Of all the qualities of the *grand siècle*, that which upheld all the others was perhaps the one that Bossuet prized so highly, and the want of which he so bitterly deplored in his pupil—application."

This year of prosperity, as he calls it, held yet another blessing in store for Ozanam, a joy that put the crown on all those that went before.

TO M. FOISSET.

"*August 7th*, 1845.

"My friends have a great deal to do this year helping me to give thanks. After so many favours which fixed my vocation in this world, and put an end to the scattering of my family, a new blessing has come to me, the greatest joy, probably, it is possible to experience here below: *I am a father!*

"We prayed much; we begged for prayers on every side; never did we feel greater need of the Divine assistance! We have been heard above and beyond all our hopes. Ah! what a moment that was when I heard the first cry of my child! when I beheld that little creature, but that immortal creature, which God has confided to me, who brought me so many delights and so many duties! With what impatience I waited for the moment of her baptism! We have called her Marie, which is her mother's name, as well as that of the powerful protectress to whose intercession we attribute this happy birth. The mother is now nearly well again, and is able to nurse her child. Thus we shall not lose the first smiles of our little angel. We will begin her education early, and, at the same

time, she will begin ours; for I perceive that Heaven has sent her to us to teach us a great deal, and to make us better. I cannot look upon that sweet little face, so full of innocence and purity, without seeing there, less obliterated than in us, the sacred impress of the Creator. I cannot think of this imperishable soul of which I shall have to render an account, without feeling myself more penetrated with my duties. How could I dare teach her lessons that I did not practise? Could God have found a kinder way of instructing me, of correcting me, and setting my feet on the road to heaven? Oh, you, dear friend, who exercise so worthily these grand functions of fatherhood, remember me before God, and ask for your young friend the light, the inspiration, the strength that he needs from above. Remember my child too, who will pay it back to you some day, I hope. Her mother, who is sincerely attached to you, bids me say how grateful she would be for an Ave Maria when you are gathered together for family prayers. Your paternal confidences of last year come back to us, and we sigh in thinking that some day we shall perhaps have to marry our little Marie! . . . Adieu. I must terminate sooner than I wish a letter that was begun, interrupted, and taken up again ten times in the midst of the Baccalauréat, which keeps me at the Sorbonne all day. I scribble off ten lines while M. Guigniaut and M. Garnier are examining, in philosophy, Greek, and Latin, unfortunate candidates who know very little about them; and I lay down my pen to put questions in history, geography, and literature, travelling over all space and time, and then coming back to you."

His little treasure was a daily increasing source of tender and poetic delight to him. "There is nothing more delicious on this earth," he says, "than on coming home to

find my beloved wife with her little baby in her arms. I then make a third figure in the group, and I would willingly lose myself for whole hours in admiring it, if presently a little cry did not come to warn me that poor human nature is very fragile, that many perils are suspended over that tiny head, and that the joys of fatherhood are only given us to sweeten its duties."

The examinations at the Sorbonne had kept him so occupied all through the summer that he was not able to escape from Paris until September, when he went with his wife and child to Nogent, a little village outside Paris.

"All this summer," he writes to Lallier, at the end of August, "I have seen no other verdure than the green table where we hold the examinations of the bachelors. These last three days I have been seated at it from ten in the morning till seven in the evening; and I can only manage to write you a line in the short interval between the question of geography and the question of history. This is why I don't touch on the great events of the day. . . . The number of our conferences has been increased by five new ones this last month. We have six now in London. Do you remember how cross we were with you in 1833, when you brought us poor de la Noue, who increased our number to nine? Now we are nearly nine thousand! So you see these poor Catholics are not dead yet. Now, as in the days of St. Paul, *quasi morientes et tamen viventes.*"

The holidays brought rest only in the shape of a change of work to Ozanam. This year they were employed in finishing what he calls his "interminable volume," on the History of Christian Civilisation amongst the Germans. "The quiet of the country affords me a leisure which I have not known for a long time," he writes; "we are

about three-quarters of an hour beyond Vincennes, on a rising ground which overlooks the Marne. The garden is large, the air is pure, the weather lovely. My wife is picking up her strength rapidly, and my child is opening out like a little flower. It is one of those moments of bliss which are not often granted to us in life, and which make us feel more keenly the goodness of Providence."

CHAPTER XVIII.

1846.

THE year 1846 was unmarked by any event of importance in Ozanam's public or private career. He continued to work as if he had a second life in reserve to supplement the frail one he drew upon so pitilessly. His health was giving way, but he did not or would not see it. His literary work was daily increasing, and absorbed all the time he could spare from his professional occupations. This did not prevent his devoting himself, as in the past, to the service of the poor. After the exhaustion of his morning's lecture at the Sorbonne, he was constantly to be heard in the evening lecturing to an assembly of working men in the crypt of St. Sulpice, and he would put forth his powers as earnestly here as when addressing the most fastidious and cultivated audience. Those who have heard him speaking to the uneducated classes, declare that it was wonderful how he contrived to bring the riches of his learning, and his lofty mind, within their reach, and how intensely they responded to the effort. "My friends," he said to them on one occasion, "we have each of us our trade in this life; my trade is to wade through old books; well, I can assure you that under the dust of these old folios I come upon lessons which the past has bequeathed to us under the most fascinating form. Let me tell you one of these old stories that charmed away the long evenings for our fathers." And with a grace and an

eloquence which the Sorbonne might have envied, he went on to relate to them one of those beautiful legends that Ireland would seem to have stolen from the East, and transfigured with her Christian touch. The rough audience listened in breathless delight, understanding and applauding. Then came the moral. "These legends," continued the orator, "are symbolical of another world, where all that we have done in this one is punished or rewarded. We are all of us like the weavers of the Gobelins, who, following out the pattern of an unknown artist, endeavour to match the threads of divers colours on the wrong side of the woof, and do not see the result of their labour. It is only when the texture is complete that they can admire at their ease these lovely flowers and figures, those splendid pictures worthy of the palaces of kings. So it is with us, my friends; we work, we suffer, and we see neither the end nor the fruit. But God sees it, and when He releases us from our task, He will disclose to our wondering gaze what He, the great artist, everywhere present and invisible, has woven out of those toils that now seem to us so sterile, and He will then deign to hang up in his palace of gold the flimsy web that we have spun."

It is not surprising that Ozanam should have been a popular speaker with the working men. He counted himself one of them, and his eloquence had in it a note of real personal pride when it dwelt upon the dignity and power of labour, of human toil in every field. His works abound in fine passages on labour as one of the regenerating forces of the world, and of arguments and examples tending to show how the labourer, oppressed and despised by Paganism, was rehabilitated by Christianity. "Let us see what Christianity has done for the *ouvriers*," he says. "Free labour has no greater enemy than slavery, consequently the ancients, who held to slavery, trampled free labour

under foot; they spurned it, and stigmatised it with the most offensive names. Even Cicero, that great and wise man whom we are so fond of quoting,—Cicero says somewhere that there is nothing liberal in manual labour; that trade, if it be small, is to be considered sordid, but if vast and opulent, need not be too severely blamed.[1] . . . According to the law of the Twelve Tables, the debtor who could not pay was placed at the discretion of his creditor to be sold as a slave, or else cut up into as many pieces as there were creditors, so that each one might have his share. In the days of Senecus they no longer cut him up, but they compelled him to sell his children, and, so far on as Constantine's reign, the children of the insolvent debtor were sold on the public market-place. This is how free labour fared under the ancients. Christianity restored it to its original rank by the example of Christ and the apostles, by that of St. Paul, who went into partnership with the Jew Aquila at Corinth, rather than eat bread which he had not gained in the sweat of his brow."[2]

Ozanam, not satisfied with proving the respectability of labour, called in poetry to invest it with dignity and beauty.

"When we plunge into the valleys of the Vosges and the Jura, into the heart of those rugged countries where the old German manners were so long retained, the first thing that strikes us is the wild majesty of the scene. But on looking closer, we find that a power stronger than nature has been at work, pursuing her to this sanctuary, subduing and compelling her to serve, not sparing even those things which seemed created for repose and liberty. I allude to the power of labour. Where shall we find a grander image of calm than those broad trees that seem

[1] *De Officiis*, l. i. c. 42.
[2] *Civilisation au 5me siècle*, vol. ii. p. 66.

born to do nothing, like the sons of the ancient kings? They must, nevertheless, come down from their heights and go and serve the peasant, who will make them uphold the roof of his cabin, or the navigator, who will use them as ribs for his ships. What is freer than the torrent? and yet labour has come and seized it in its bed, and imprisoned it, and bound it like a slave to the mill. Say not that these manufactories are a blot upon the wild beauty of the desert: the ring of the hammer and the smoke of the forge proclaim to you that creation obeys man, and man God."[1]

The universal law of labour applies with him in equal force to the sons of toil who till the earth and draw water from the river, and to those labourers who dig in the field of science, art, or literature. Here it is that he expresses with perfect sincerity the sense of kindred with his lowlier brother workmen.

Speaking of the progress of the French language from its ruder stages under Clovis, Charlemagne, the Middle Ages, and up to the period when Pascal came to define its limits, and Bourdaloue and Bossuet to ennoble and refine it, and bring it to that state of perfection which it is the duty of living men of letters to preserve, he goes on to say,—"Hence the obligation of work. Work is the common law of mankind; it is the law of the mind as well as of the body; for it was also to the labours of the mind that those words pronounced on the day of the Fall applied,—'Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow.' Look at that long tradition of labour in the Church, from Origen, the man with the bowels of brass, as St. Augustine called him, who began so late, and nevertheless saw everything, down to St. Thomas, who died at nine-and-forty, leaving us seventeen volumes in folio. In more modern times, see

[1] *Études Germaniques*, ii. chap. ix. p. 649.

Bossuet rising at two o'clock in the morning to resume the work he had scarcely interrupted; see d'Aguesseau declaring that a change of work was the only recreation the mind needed; see those magistrates of the seventeenth century going forth at six in the morning to take their seats on the *fleurs-de-lis*, giving the whole day to the public functions, the evening to the education of their children, and dividing the night between study and prayer. Seven or eight hours a day given to science alarms the solicitude of our friends for our wretched health. Let us remember, nevertheless, that we are not dispensed by faith from fatigue and watchings. Labour, the chastisement of the Fall, has become the law of regeneration. It is labour that produces glorious epochs, when it finds inspiration there, and, when it does not find it, it still produces useful men and estimable nations."[1]

The examinations for the Baccalaureat came round, and brought their usual increase of work to the Professor, who again describes himself in the sultry August heat, "sitting for eight or ten hours a day at that blessed green table," and trying to write a hurried line to a friend between Greek and mathematics, "surrounded by yawning colleagues and trembling candidates," and pining inexpressibly for a breath of fresh country air. "Nothing is comparable to the pleasures of the woods and fields," he says; "the balmy air, the very odours of the farm-yard, are all conducive to health; the country is full of teaching and full of consolation, and we deprive ourselves of both by remaining penned up in the walls of our cities." But he turns, after this little petulant outbreak, to deeper sources of consolation: "We Catholics have this happiness, that our cause wills to be served at the same time in different ways, that adapt themselves to the diversity of characters and minds; it requires

[1] *Devoirs Littéraires des Chrétiens—Mélanges*, i. p. 160.

men of war and men of peace, the crusade of controversy and the proselytism of charity. I admire those who fight gloriously in the breach, but I cannot help preferring for my friends and myself the other ministry, which if less brilliant is also less dangerous. . . ."

But this life of arduous toil and study could not go on with impunity for ever. The body is long-suffering, and bears a great deal from the noble tyranny of the soul, but, driven beyond certain limits, it rebels and vindicates its rights. Before the end of the examinations Ozanam fell ill of a malignant fever, which placed his life in great danger. At the beginning of September he had begun to recover, and writes to M. Léon Boré from Meudon, on the 22d :—

"My long silence would have been an unpardonable ingratitude if it had been voluntary; but just as I was taking up my pen to thank you for your two kind letters, I was seized with the first symptoms of a fever of such an alarming character that I should probably not have got over it but for the excellent care of our common friend M. Gourand, and the intelligent and courageous self-devotion of Amélie, which was an immense support to me through this crisis. God has, however, seen good to spare me a little while longer, in order that I may have time to grow better; and as if to prolong the salutary warning of the illness itself, my convalescence, which has lasted nearly a month, still keeps me in a state of weakness that renders the least bodily exertion, the slightest mental effort, impossible. I never before *felt* what a poor creature man is. I can't tell you how humiliated I feel to be eating and sleeping well, and yet so exhausted that an hour's application suffices to fatigue my head and compel me to lie down. I use the first liberty the doctors have granted me to repair a delay which was weighing on my heart. . . . I was for a long time overwhelmed with innumerable and imperative occupations, to the excess of

which, so they say, my illness is to be attributed. Now I am condemned to complete idleness, and the better to draw my mind away from men and books, they have buried me in the woods of Meudon. My wife has come in to protest against my writing too much. I let her take the pen out of my hand, just for the sake of giving a good example to all the husbands of the earth."

The illness had found him so reduced in strength that it was astonishing that he should have battled through it at all; and now, though nominally recovered, he continued in a state of such alarming prostration that it became a question whether he had vitality enough left to rally to his normal state. The doctors declared his only chance was to take a year's complete rest. Even if pecuniary difficulties had not intervened, this was a difficult prescription for Ozanam. How was that ardent mind, with its sleepless activity, to be kept idle for a whole year? There was but one way of doing it; this was to spend the interval in travelling. M. de Salvandy, the Minister of Public Instruction, hearing of the circumstances, hastened to facilitate things by sending the Professor on a literary mission to Italy. It was done with the kindest intention, and not with the view of turning the period of relaxation into a change of fatigue; but Ozanam's extreme conscientiousness gave the mission too much of that character.

CHAPTER XIX.

1847.

STARTING in November 1846, Ozanam and his wife made a tour in the south of France, and then went by slow stages through Genoa and Florence to Rome, where they were to pass the winter. Under this delightful *régime* his health rapidly revived, although he did not spare it in the service of his mission. Every journey he made produced a book, sometimes two. The result of the present one was his volumes entitled *Unpublished Documents to serve for the Literary History of Italy from the Eighth to the Thirteenth Century*, and that charming book, *The Franciscan Poets*. The first he considered his work, the latter was his recreation. But the work had presently to be given up. The fatigue of copying out Latin and Italian MSS. in the libraries and museums all the morning, then classifying and arranging them in the afternoon, began to tell upon his health, still far from restored, and he was compelled to give up altogether by the time he reached Rome. "Plead for me with the *mauvaises langues*, who are accusing me of silence and laziness," he writes to his brother from Rome in February. "Ask Charles to call on M. Ampère, and M. Ballanche, and Monsieur Récamier, and to tell them I will write in a few days, and that I am ashamed of not having done it sooner. The fact is, that at Florence my time was entirely taken up with researches in the libraries, etc. Since I have been here I have made a scruple of writing a line until I had

finished my never-ending preface, which is drawing to a close now. But a few days after my arrival I was seized with a nervous *malaise*, without, however, experiencing any of those alarming symptoms which accompanied this summer's attack of fever, only I was incapable of any sort of work, and quite in harmony with the public mind here, which was all turned towards *fêtes* and jollifications."

The first *fête* that he assisted at was a low mass celebrated by the Pope at the Church of St. Apollinarius. He describes the church as decorated with draperies of red, white, and blue, embroidered in silver and gold, and illuminated with countless lustres, candelabras, and torches. "These decorations are apt to shock us at first," he remarks, "accustomed as we are to the naked majesty of the Gothic churches, and yet there is something joyous and pleasing about them. They are suited to a people who treat more tenderly and familiarly with God, and they have the appearance of a family rejoicing. It was indeed at a *fête* of this sort that we were about to assist. The students of the Seminary[1] were drawn up on either side of the door in silence, but with faces all alight with pleasure. At a quarter-past eight the bells rang out, and the Pope entered with a small *cortége*. He wore a white soutane, and carried his scarlet hat in his hand. He said a low mass, assisted only by four priests, slowly and with great fervour. At the moment of the Communion all the Seminarists approached two and two and received Holy Communion from the hand of the Holy Father, who looked in truth like a father in the midst of his children. Up to this point it was all most edifying, but it became sublime when the Pope, having given Communion to all the ecclesiastics, expressed the desire to distribute it to the people. Then the guards fell back, and the Sovereign Pontiff de-

[1] St. Apollinarius is the church of the Seminarists in Rome.

scended the steps of the altar, holding the Blessed Sacrament in his hands. At the same moment there was a forward movement in the crowd to meet him and fall down before the Communion-rails. The steps were covered with two rows of the faithful, crushed together, trembling, overcome to tears; no distinction of any sort. There was there the Queen-Dowager of Saxony, poor Italian peasants, women and men of many nations, and, in the midst of the crowd, my Amélie and I side by side, as we have ever been in joy and sorrow, as we trust to be to the end of life, and beyond it. . . . The sacred procession drew near to us. I beheld that admirable countenance of Pius IX. all illuminated by the torches, aglow with the sanctity of the act, the moment,—nobler, gentler than ever. I kissed his ring, the ring of the fisherman, which for eighteen centuries has sealed so many immortal deeds. Then I tried to see no more, to forget everything, in order to remember only Him who is our Master, and before whom Pontiffs are but dust."

Every letter that Ozanam writes from Rome is marked with tender enthusiasm for Pius IX. He describes his person as "well adapted to his glorious *rôle* of popularity; his figure is lofty and well-formed, his face slightly coloured, and, as he is but fifty-four years of age, he would still look young if it were not for the grey that has begun to streak his hair, and the wrinkles, which already testify to the burden of the Pontificate. They say that he is greatly changed since his election, but what has not changed is the expression of his face. I never saw so much nobleness, innocence, and sweetness combined. When he speaks he is quickly moved, and his emotion, his penetrating voice, stirs all hearts." Their joyous sojourn in the Holy City was for a time clouded by the sudden death of a young brother of Amélie's, to whom they were both much attached.

"The terrible news reached us just as we were finishing a Novena for his recovery. . . . Our beloved brother died like a martyr, after living like a saint. At the age of three-and-twenty he took leave of this world, I do not say with resignation, but with a Divine joy. He leaves a terrible void in his family, to whom his sufferings were a sorrow, but whom he consoled by his virtues, his serenity, and his noble intellect. His sister has not yet got over the blow, and for the last twenty days my one care has been to support her under this affliction."

But Easter was at hand, and no sorrow in Catholic hearts could withstand the flood of consolation which it brings, with its pomps and blessings and festal glories. Ozanam grows quite lyrical in his letters home now that Easter has come.

TO M. PROSPER DUGAS.

"ROME, *Easter Sunday* 1847.

". . . This is the moment to speak to you of the Papacy, now that I have just assisted at its most solemn pageants, and am still under the spell of the emotion called up by that most thrilling spectacle which is to be seen on earth, the papal mass and the benediction of the *Urbi et Orbi*. . . .

"On Easter Sunday some twenty thousand persons assisted at mass (at St. Peter's), and there was still an immense space free for the ceremonies; you cannot conceive anything more grand, more harmonious, than the arrangement of the sacred *cortége* and its processions from the throne to the altar. At the moment of the elevation, when the Pope turns round and holds up the blessed Host and the precious Blood, and all the orders of the Church represented by their chiefs and delegates, all the Christian nations represented by their ambassadors, their penitents, their pilgrims, are prostrate in a common adoration; when

all the memories of Catholicism are gathered round this altar, where the sovereign pontiffs have offered the sacrifice, from St. Peter, whose tomb is underneath, to those generations of popes and saints of all times entombed below the pavement of the basilica,—oh! then, my friend, one is conscious of an infinite joy in seeing thus worthily honoured our God, so often disowned and outraged. Heretics and schismatics who happen to be present are not proof against the impression: you see them bow their heads with the rest, and sometimes exclaim involuntarily, 'How beautiful!' But how shall I describe to you what I beheld and felt when, mass being finished, the great doors opened to pour forth the multitude on the piazza, already covered with an enormous crowd; for it is calculated that over sixty thousand men were assembled there, waiting for the blessing! The country people came flocking in in their picturesque costumes; the soldiers stood under arms, and an immense concourse of Romans, who are not in the habit of following these ceremonies, were present this year, in honour of the first Easter of Pius IX.

"And yet, when the Pope appeared on the balcony, accompanied by the cardinals, all was hushed into a silence so sudden, so deep, so universal, that you heard from beginning to end every word of the prayers uttered by the Pontiff, until the moment when he rose, with an indescribable majesty, and blessed the city and the world, and then from every point of the vast piazza there resounded, *Amen!* It was the grandest act of faith I ever witnessed in my life.

"The religious ceremony was barely concluded when the populace could no longer contain itself, and, what was never known under the preceding pontificate, *vivats* burst forth, handkerchiefs and hats were waved, and the hearts of the people seemed carried away by an immense love.

The civic guard wanted to put their schakos on the end of their guns and genuflect, and thus render to Pius IX. a military honour that was only given to Napoleon; but the Pope, being informed of this intention, forbade any political demonstration to be mingled with what was entirely a sacred solemnity. Nevertheless the civic guard waited a long time on the piazza, amidst an enormous crowd, in hopes of being able to salute the Holy Father when he passed on his way back to the Quirinal. He again baffled their eagerness by delaying his return until four in the afternoon, and then, when his carriage appeared, the people made a rush to unyoke the horses, and when the Pope forbade this they accompanied him to the Quirinal, that is to say, more than half a league's distance, and the palace square was instantaneously flooded with a countless multitude, who greeted Pius IX. with the liveliest acclamations. He had to show himself again on the balcony, and give them once more his pontifical and paternal benediction. The evening before, four hundred young men, with lighted torches, assembled under his windows, to sing him a cantata, and wish him, according to the pious custom of the country, a happy Easter. The evening before that again, as he wished, over and above the official washing of the feet, to go and wash the feet of the poor at the Pilgrims' Hospital, when he went out the streets were illuminated, as if by magic, as he passed along. The people did what they are in the habit of doing for the Viaticum when it is carried at night: everybody went to the door or stood at the window with a lamp in their hand. But these lamps that are so quickly extinguished are but a pale symbol of the ardent love of the people for their bishops and their prince. . . .

"You are aware what opposition the Pope meets with from a portion of the Sacred College, the Prelacy, the Roman nobility, and the diplomatic body; but don't fancy

he is as isolated as people would make out; he has rallied to his views some of the cardinals who are held in the highest veneration for their virtues and their capacity; little by little he is reforming the Court, where he had so many adversaries.

"There is less to build on with the laity, hitherto unacquainted with business, and with their political education yet to be acquired, so as to fit them for a suitable place in the government or the administration. This is what Pius IX. is strenuously aiming at, to get as many laymen as possible into the different consultative commissions which he has formed, and, what is more decisive, in forming the tribunal of censure, recently instituted, of *one* ecclesiastic and *four* laymen.

"This institution has attracted great notice, and given umbrage to some impatient spirits, who were for a brusque declaration of the liberty of the Press. Two men, however, who enjoy the full confidence of the party of progress, Professor Orioli and M. d'Azeglio, have taken up the defence of the edict of censorship, and shown what kindness there is in a measure which tolerates the discussion of all matters of public administration, where the mutual control of five persons is substituted for the arbitrary censorship of one, and which points out the cases where publication may be stopped, so that outside these special cases the censorship cannot interfere with a writer. Opinion is accordingly beginning to veer round towards the measure, and to understand that it enters perfectly into the policy of Pius IX., a policy of reformation always, but never of revolution.

"Thus it is that he has dismissed no one, but has profited by the death of several magistrates to suppress their places. . . . Thus again it is that, instead of suppressing some religious orders, which were useless, but not scandalous, he forbade them to receive novices. . . .

"Traits like these testify to the wisdom of a Sovereign who is as benign as he is wise. I could cite you plenty of others which prove him to be a holy prelate, a zealous priest, a saint in fact. . . .

"He has resumed, one by one, all the active functions of the episcopacy,—preaching, giving confirmation, visiting, *incognito*, schools and hospitals, and the poor in their garrets, going to say mass in any obscure chapel, and distributing Communion to all who are present, as my wife and I had the happiness of receiving it from him. And, with all this, a purity of life that was the admiration of those who knew him as a young priest, and a charity so boundless that when he set out to come to the Conclave he was obliged to borrow six hundred crowns for his journey. . . . But what strikes one above everything else in him are those two sentiments that have made the greatness of all great Popes,—an immovable faith in the Divine authority vested in him, and a profound conviction of his unworthiness; a trust in God that enables him to undertake everything, and a contempt for himself that enables him to suffer everything; hence the *auréole* of sanctity which illuminates his countenance, and that burning accent which pervades his discourse.

"We had the honour of being received in a private audience. His Holiness made my wife sit down, and caressed and blessed my little daughter of eighteen months. He spoke to us of France, of the youth of our schools, of the duties of professorship, with a nobility, an emotion, and a charm that are indescribable. When I said that the deserved popularity of his name would hasten the return of public feeling towards Catholicism, 'I know,' he replied, 'that God has worked that miracle, and that prejudice against the Holy See has suddenly given way to respect and love; but what utterly confounds me is that

He should have made use of a wretch like me to effect this change.'

". . . I must tell you, since in your quality of father you will understand my pride, that our little Marie behaved herself like a little angel. Seeing her mother and me kneel down before the Pope, she knelt down too of her own accord, clasped her small hands with an air of veneration; and the Holy Father was so delighted, that three or four days afterwards he condescended to allude to it in speaking about us to a French priest: 'They brought me their little child, who was quite charming; the dear little thing went down on her knees, and looked up at me as if I were the good God!'

"And don't you think she was right, my little Marie? and that she recognised truly the representative of Him who said, 'Suffer the little ones to come unto Me'?"

Immediately after Easter, Ozanam started off alone to Monte Cassino to make some researches in the fine library of the monks. The hurried expedition, the strain of the long day spent deciphering and copying from the old parchments, together with the intense cold of the monastery, brought on a return of the feverish attack he had suffered from at Florence.

"I started off by diligence from Naples, and returned in the same way, passing two nights on the road, and only thirty-six hours at the Abbey," he writes to his brother on the 29th of April. "If I had been enticed there solely by a passion for art, I should certainly have been cruelly disappointed. In a place which one expects to find full of the traces of Christian antiquity, you find only a church of the eighteenth century, rich in marbles and gilding, but without a single painting or statue of any value. Fortunately I was able to communicate at the tomb of St. Bene-

dict, and I came upon all the Benedictine traditions in the admirable library of the Abbey, and amongst the learned monks, who did me the honours of it. They showed me some precious manuscripts, from which I made extracts; this will not be the least valuable part of my literary booty. But these good monks, who know so many things, don't know how to warm themselves, and I nearly died of cold in their fine archives, and came away with an uncomfortable feeling, which ended in an attack of fever when I got to Rome. Happily it only lasted a day, and allowed me to go in a tolerably fit state to the audience which the Sovereign Pontiff kindly granted me on the Monday evening. I had to thank him for the support which he condescended to lend me in my researches, and I wished to offer him my book, and also to present to him some letters for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It was nine o'clock when I was admitted, and the Pope seemed very tired with the business he had been getting through with his minister and several public functionaries. His Holiness, nevertheless, received me with a cordiality that touched me deeply; he inquired after my health, that of my wife, and my little girl, in a tone of the most charming friendliness and familiarity. Seeing him so kind towards me and mine, I ventured to speak to him of my brothers, of the one who is a priest, and I asked for his blessing on both."

One last delight was in reserve for the travellers.

On the 21st of April, Rome celebrated the 2600th year of her foundation. The people solemnised it by an immense national banquet; tables were laid above the Thermæ of Titus for eight hundred guests, while two thousand persons were invited to be present, seated in the surrounding space, which was ornamented with flags, mottoes, and flowers. The dinner was only a pretext, for, as

Ozanam remarks, "the handful of dishes served would not have frightened the sobriety of Curius and Cato." The real motive of the gathering was the speeches, the harangues, and patriotic songs, with which the precincts resounded loud and long. Many eminent men were present, amongst them Orioli, the famous Professor, and Manzoni's son-in-law, the Marquis d'Azeglio. The morning after this merry-making, a piece of important news was circulated through Rome. The Pope had decreed, in a circular from Cardinal Gizzi, that each province should send in the names of three notable citizens, amongst which the Government would choose one who should permanently represent the province, and furnish such information as was needed towards the accomplishment of certain reforms in its municipal institutions. The population was electrified by the news, and Ozanam shall describe the way in which their enthusiasm expressed itself:—

"We knew nothing of this event, which was filling the whole city, and we were bitterly regretting the only thing that was wanted to complete the delight of our visit, namely, that we had not witnessed one of those striking popular ovations of which we had heard so often. Amélie, too, was inconsolable at having to leave without seeing the Pope once more, and carrying away a parting blessing. We had hoped that during the evening we might have met him out walking, as it had happened to us before, but this hope, like so many others, was disappointed. We were just coming into the house when we were informed that the people were getting ready to thank the Pope for his new edict, and that there would be a beautiful *fête aux flambeaux*. We swallowed our dinner as quickly as possible, and then, with the Abbé Gerbet and a few friends, who had come to say goodbye to us, we hurried to the Corso. The rendezvous was at the Piazza del Popolo. Torches were

being distributed, and those who took them ranged themselves ten abreast, with a leader of the file. But the crowd was so great that we could only get a little above the Church of St. Charles. There we were able to see the outset of the triumphal march. It opened by lines of men with lighted torches; then came the circular of Cardinal Gizzi printed on white linen, and carried aloft like a large banner; then a band of military music; then a dense column of men holding torches, to the number, it is estimated, of about six thousand. Nothing is more striking than the order which reigned in the impromptu army, and nothing was more touching than to see walking side by side, in the same ranks, men of the highest classes, workmen in blouses, priests in their soutane, many of them with white hair, and all united in the same feeling, expressed in the same cry, *Viva Pio Nono! Viva Gizzi!* This is the first time I ever heard *vivats* addressed to a minister.

"As the *cortége* advanced to the Corso, the houses were illuminated on the road. At every story one saw the windows opening and people bending forward with lamps; frequently there were lanterns, coloured glasses, flags with mottoes, and thundering cheers were interchanged by the street and the windows. . . . After following the crowd to the Piazza Colonna we rushed off by the adjacent streets in order to reach more quickly the Piazza of Monte Cavallo, whither it was advancing. The Piazza was already filled with people. We were so fortunate as to meet with some persons in a carriage, who invited Amélie to get into it. I stood on the step, and we were thus enabled to take in the whole scene. Presently we beheld the torch-bearers approaching; the closely packed crowd opened to make way for them, and allowed them to form themselves into a square in front of the Papal palace. In the centre of the square was the edict hoisted like a banner, and the music.

A few pieces were played, and then there arose a great shout; lights were seen passing behind the windows of the palace; they advanced slowly to the window of the balcony, which opened, and the Sovereign Pontiff came forward accompanied by two prelates and a few servants with torches. He appeared much moved by the gratitude that was being shown to him, and bowed to the right and left with his habitual grace. The liveliest acclamations answered him on every side, women waved their kerchiefs and men their hats; there was clapping of hands, and never-ending cries of *Viva Pio Nono!* It was not the watchword of a hackneyed official ovation; they knew well that they must ask that he may live, and that the highest interests of Italy and the world are bound up in his life. But what touched me most of all was this: The Pope made a sign, and suddenly you heard the word *zitto!* (hush!) On every side, and in less than a minute, the most profound silence had fallen on the excited multitude. You could hear distinctly the voice of the Pontiff raised to bless his people, and when he stretched forth his hand, and, making the sign of the cross, pronounced the solemn words, one mighty *Amen!* responded from end to end of the vast piazza. There is no grander spectacle on earth than that of a whole city thus praying with its Pontiff in the deep night-time, under the starlight of a heavenly sky. And what shows that the spectators all felt it to be a religious rite, the moment the Pope withdrew from the balcony, the torches were extinguished, and the scene was only lighted by the stray urns of blue light from the terraces of the neighbouring palaces.

"The idea evidently did not occur to anybody to continue the pleasure of the promenade by torchlight, any more than it occurred to them, amidst so many other cries, to utter one against Austria, Cardinal Lambruschini, or against

any of the partisans of the late Government; nothing that displayed hatred or animosity, nothing but respect alone. Nor was there in this immense crowd, with carriages and horses in every direction, the slightest disorder, not a single booby who thought fit to raise a panic to terrify the women and children, as they are so fond of doing in Paris; I might have let my little Marie and her nurse walk about in the midst of it, such are the gentleness, dignity, and even obligingness of the people here. We left the Piazza of the Quirinal with the last lingering groups at half-past nine, and found the streets on our way home silent and deserted as at midnight. The Romans had lain down to sleep like so many good children who before going to bed come and say good-night to their father."

But Ozanam could not think of sleep; he was too excited by the spectacle he had beheld, and by the novel and wonderful prospect which it opened out in the future. He lingered for some time at the foot of the obelisk in the centre of the piazza, plunged in a deep and happy meditation. What he had just witnessed appeared to him, no doubt, as nothing less than the end of the strife, the solution of the problem which had been distracting Europe for more than fifty years. For over half a century Christendom had been invoking liberty, seeking and demanding it as a sacred and imperative right, and resolved to conquer it at any price. But there were those who told her she could only do this on condition of renouncing Christianity, that the two were incompatible; and they bade her choose, but she could not choose, for both were essential to her. Society rebelled against this creed of incompatibility, and swore to prove it false; hence the rending that had torn it so long, while it exhausted itself in the passionate effort of reconciliation. And lo! to-night, this very hour, here,

under the starlit sky of the city of the Cæsars, the reconciliation had taken place; the old antagonism had been destroyed, and the problem solved: the Vicar of Christ, the Pontiff and Prince of Christendom, had taken Liberty by the hand, and signed a solemn covenant with her.

Judging by the light of subsequent events, and of the present, we cannot repress a smile as we watch Ozanam brooding in silent exultation over his victorious ideal. We are often at a loss to understand the mixture of sound philosophy, shrewd sense, and utopian chimera that flourish side by side in the minds of men of genius. Ozanam presents one of those interesting phenomena. But while considering the paradoxes which he cherishes so complacently, and so devoutly believes in, we must not lose sight of the fact that he was in reality more an inhabitant of the past than of the present. He lived in the middle ages; it was from them that he took his idea of democracy, from those republics which, in their most turbulent periods, were always under strong religious control, and whose democracy was as different from the anti-Christian and pantheistic democracy of the present age as the wild follies of the crusading armies were from the hideous licence of the incendiaries of the Commune. He lost sight, moreover, of the fact that the republics of the middle ages were so but in name, being oligarchies in reality; the people talked loud about their independence, but they meekly accepted the rule of a few leaders. It is only on this condition, through the unity engendered amongst the multitude by the influence of one governing mind and will, that democracy can be maintained in its most modified form. No State can be secure or stable that is not cemented by this unity. Happily for the peace of the world, mankind knows this, and instinctively acts upon it; men are gregarious,

and must have a leader, who is king for the time being, by whatever name he may be called.

Ozanam's idea was that religion would constitute this cohesive element in the State, that the Church would create the bond of unity which would enable society to govern itself. He was a confirmed optimist in his estimate of the goodness and governableness of mankind in general, and French mankind in particular; we see this in his frequent and tender apologies for "the poor devils who are beguiled to the barricades, but who are Christians at heart, and ready to melt at a word of kindness." Such a republican carries his ideal republic in his head, losing sight of the one that will really result from an attempt to realise his ideal,—a republic of violence, bloodshed, and disorder, over which he and his views will have no influence, a thing going from one excess to another, led, or lured, or driven by the most wicked men, who are always the foremost and most aggressive, until finally it is crushed by some new despotism in arms. Ozanam, like other men of genius, was so satisfied with the theoretical perfection of his ideal, that he was blind to the presence of underlying elements, which would work out to results the very opposite of those he looked for. He was quite right in asserting that he was no politician in the practical sense of the word; his theories were indeed lofty and beautiful, but, except as applied to social questions, they were absolutely inapplicable to the Europe of the nineteenth century.

He applauded the policy of Pius IX. the more enthusiastically that he fancied he saw in it the realisation of his own political creed. He was a republican, not only because he held a republic to be the best form of government, but because he believed it was that to which all nations were gradually, some unconsciously, others reluctantly, but all inevitably tending. He saw the day fast

approaching when the people would be the ruling power in every State; it was essential, therefore, if the world was to be well governed that the people should be Christianised; otherwise they would destroy and subvert all authority. Democracy appeared to him like the rising tide which no power on earth can stay, can bid "Thus far, and no farther;" it depended on the present rulers of Europe—kings, statesmen, and politicians—whether it was to be a wave that would peacefully float society over that crisis which is inevitable in every transition from an old order of things to a new, or whether it was to be a destroying torrent that would sweep all before it in ruin and desolation. Rome was now threatened by this rising tide, and though Ozanam distinctly recognised the fact, he did not discern at this moment how deeply the waters were poisoned at their source. On one hand, Russia, with the schism of the Greek Church and the encroaching policy of the Czars, marching steadily on to Constantinople, to the possession of eastern Europe, was a perpetual menace. Austria, on the other hand, was a hostile force which had been jealously working against the Pontiff from the moment of his election; his grand scheme of reform and his erect attitude of independence alarmed and offended the Cabinet of Vienna, and it lay in wait to seize any pretext that might present itself for creating a disturbance in the Papal territory, for aiding and abetting the slightest show of disaffection amongst the people. The secret societies were spread like a net all over the country, breathing hatred to Christianity and all that represented it; the Pope, who was emancipating his people from the oppressive and retrograde system that had weighed on them so long, admitting laymen to office, proclaiming the *Consulta*, reforming every department of the State, and this without violence or any irritating coercive measures—the Pope was represented as their

worst enemy, the enemy of all progress and liberty, the secret canker of Italy, which would never be free until she was delivered from him. Then there was the intense desire to drive the Austrians out, which complicated everything; the Father of Christendom could not make war on them, for "they too were his children."

Pius IX. saw all these things, but without alarm or mistrust. He loved his people and his country more sincerely, and far more wisely, than any of the "patriots" who were accusing him, than any Mazzini who sought to serve both by the dastardly weapons of assassination and calumny; he saw the evils that existed and those that threatened, but he saw them with the undaunted courage of a man who seeks his inspirations higher than in the counsels of this world. Ozanam lived to see the failure of the Pontiff's noble and generous efforts, but he never lost faith in their essential rightness and ultimate success; he did not join with those who turned on freedom and cursed it as a viper whose first use of its restored vitality is to sting the breast that cherished it; he held firm in his belief that Pius IX. had done well in holding out his hand to liberty, and embracing her as the natural and powerful helpmate of religion. The result shocked and pained, but did not bewilder him or throw him into despair. Even in those sanguine days of the young pontificate he was prepared for evil times following. He said at a public meeting on his return from Rome: "I believe firmly the future has serious troubles in store for Pius IX.; I believe it for his greater glory. God does not raise up such men for ordinary difficulties. If this great Pontiff had only to cope with the over-enthusiasm, the eagerness of his people—a thing that so few princes have to complain of—his mission would be an easy one; it would fill too small a place in history; his bark would glide over tranquil waters. We

must look out for the tempest. But let us not fear, like the disciples of little faith: Christ is in the boat, and He is not sleeping; never has He been more wakeful than in these present days."

But with all his desire to hold the balance even, the scales dipped sensibly to the side of hope, of jubilant expectation. "The first, the strongest, the sweetest of my hopes rests on the Pope himself," he says. "When God wishes to bring forth great events in the Christian world, He begins by sowing the seed of saints there. A few years ago a preacher who has the gift of inspired language was evangelising the youth of France from the pulpit of Notre Dame; casting a sorrowful glance over modern Europe, he cried out, 'Oh God, give us saints! it is long since we have seen any!' Let us rejoice, Heaven has granted more than we asked. It has seated on the chair of St. Peter a saint such as the world has not seen since the pontificate of Pius V. . . . This sanctity, which illuminates his countenance, permeates his life, and all his actions, and as it is the best part of his authority, so it is the principle of all his reforms. People were greatly mistaken as to the intentions of Pius IX. Some took him for a weak sovereign, conquered by popularity; others for a clever politician, gained over to the opinions of his age. But he himself, pouring out his heart to a friend, confessed that in proclaiming the amnesty he had thought only of all the hearts, led astray by political hatred, whom this free pardon might win back to God. And they proved he was not mistaken when, a few weeks afterwards, a great number of the subjects of the amnesty assembled at the basilica of St. Peter's Chains, and went to Communion together, as if to publicly proclaim their return to a religion of clemency. So it was with the institution of the Civic Guard, which astonished and alarmed half the Cabinets of

Europe, but which, in the intention of the Pope, was nothing but an energetic measure against idleness, that is to say, against the chief moral plague of Italy. In placing under arms the immense crowd of idlers that encumber the towns and the country districts, in subjecting them to the fatigue of military exercises and discipline, he not only snatched them from the temptations of idleness, he formed them to work. People fancied he was raising soldiers for himself, while he was solely bent on forming citizens. . . ."

The *Consulta*, the decree, the provoked, the magnificent popular ovation which Ozanam describes on the eve of his leaving Rome, was in itself a giant stride in the road of reform. Three deputies from every town did not constitute a Parliament, but they made the beginning of one; and those who were wise looked on approvingly at the sagacious slowness of the Sovereign Pontiff in thus patiently building up the edifice of reform step by step, instead of rushing precipitately into full-grown institutions, as the more impatient radicals wished him to do. Neighbouring nations looked with amazement at these liberal proceedings, and, remembering the feats of the Commune of Paris, augured that the Pope would soon regret his concessions. But history was there to show a precedent in his favour. The *Consulta* had roots in the past, and closely resembled a consulting legislative body composed of ecclesiastics, founded four centuries before by Nicolas V., but which Pius IX. now revived under secular conditions adapted to the needs of the age. The Roman population so far amply vindicated his confidence in them. It was a noble spectacle to behold them leaping at one bound into freedom without violence or disorder, without the slightest offence against moderation, gentleness, or sobriety. Ozanam, who considered it with the eyes of a poet and the heart of a Christian philosopher, saw in "this revolution with flowers

and poetry," as he termed it, the assured triumph of his own utopian dreams. Europe beyond the Alps, accustomed to revolutions of a different order, and achieved with different weapons, looked on in undisguised astonishment at a people inaugurating their liberty, not with barricades and gunpowder, but with flowery noonday *festas* and torchlight processions. But in a country where poetry is the spontaneous language of popular emotion, how could it be absent from the dawn of the national freedom? "Let us not despise those populations who march forth to liberty through streets garlanded with flowers and festooned with flags, flaming with lights, resounding with choirs of music and hymns," cries Ozanam. "Let us not shrug our shoulders like men who believe only in the power of the sword. We must hope great things from a people who can thus adorn the first hours of their emancipation; who are content with little; who are neither *blasés* nor tired of life; whose men do not murder one another through vanity or through idleness; a people who have small experience, but a vast amount of enthusiasm, and who hold firmly to faith, which is the true principle of order, and to love, which is the true principle of liberty."

Ozanam was convinced that the moral strength of a nation may be tested by the amount of liberty it is capable of bearing, without prejudice to order. A hunger for freedom he held to be a sign of national health; thus it followed, that where others saw only revolutionary instincts which it was the duty of authority to crush, he recognised salutary inspirations, which it behoved the legislator to enlighten and direct. The philosophy of history, as he interpreted it, had led him to believe that there is no real meaning or character in the movement of human society unless through all its changes and convulsions we can discern a steady and continued progress through Christianity

to the dignity of freedom. This condition of freedom, which he held so essential to the welfare and happiness of communities, he considered equally indispensable to the Church. He was consequently intolerant of the least bondage for her, and impatient that a Christian people should tolerate it, when at the same time they were perhaps fighting manfully for the emancipation of their country. If the Church were free, free in the fullest sense of the word—free to guide, to rule, and to teach mankind,—then all legitimate freedom would follow.

Immediately after Holy Week Ozanam and his wife left Rome, and began a little tour through Italy homewards. They visited all the shrines that lay within their reach, Sienna, Bologna, Padua, etc., and beheld everywhere the footprints of genius following closely on the track of sanctity. "It seems," remarks Ozanam, "as if it sufficed to bury a saint somewhere for all the arts to flower out in that spot." But of all the sanctuaries which they visited, none delighted them so much as that of Assisi, all fragrant as it is with the memory of St. Clare and St. Francis—sweet St. Francis, who made such friends with the doves and the wild beasts.

They arrived at Venice late in May, and nothing that Ozanam had yet seen in this land of wonders and of beauty had prepared him for the surprise which here awaited him. Night was falling, and the long canal, by which they entered the city, was lighted only by a few stars overhead and the beacons of the gondolas that shot past each other silent and dark in their black draperies, like phantoms gliding over the water. As they advanced, palaces rose on every side, until the gondola turned off into the little canal that conducted them to their hotel. After a hasty refreshment they sallied forth to see the city, as far as it could be seen by night. They went at once to the Piazza;

it was flooded with light, which magnified its size to immensity.

Ozanam says he did not see this; he dreamt it, and expected to find the dream vanish when he awoke at daybreak. "It was ten o'clock; music was playing on every side, groups of young men and maidens stopped beneath the porticoes to listen; I began to realise all the subtle danger that lurked in this enchanted life of ancient Venice, all that made the charm of that magic city, and all that had wrought her ruin. . . . The dream returned for ten mornings. I have now seen the sun rise ten times over Venice, and each time I have found that my dream has not vanished. Venice has performed far more than she promised. No church of Italy, not that of Pisa, whose fine colonnades I so loved, nor that of Orvieto, with its paintings and bas-reliefs, nor the dome of St. Vital of Ravenna, nor the mosaics of St. Apollinarius, of Sta. Maria Maggiore, and the Cathedral of Montréal, no religious monument so far has struck me as so instructive as St. Mark, which combines the style of the East and of the West, and whose mosaics contain the whole history of Christendom, while the inscriptions that cover its walls are in themselves a grand religious poem."

Time fled swiftly in the magic city, where life seemed a dream, gliding in gondolas over the lagoons, or musing by moonlight on the shores of Lido, listening to the waves of the Adriatic as they sung their lullaby to the stars. There were little pilgrimages, too, to adjacent shrines, monasteries, and temples, fragments of a glory and a prosperity once famous as that of Venice herself; monks still haunted them, and kept guard over that sacred deposit of the past which had survived decay,—books, unique manuscripts, statues, pictures, frescoes. All this was placed freely at the disposal of Ozanam. But his enjoyment in Venice was not without

alloy. "I saw in one of the halls of the palace," he says, "the allegorical figures of Veronese representing with pompous devices all that ever made the power of Venice: Faith, *nunquam derelicta;* Justice and Strength, *fundamentum reipublicæ, custodes libertatis;* the Navy, *robur imperii;* and that liberty was badly guarded, and that empire badly upheld. In the great council hall were ranged the portraits of the Doges, and, after the last, there is a vacant space for those that were to follow. On the piazza are the three masts, stripped of the banners of the three kingdoms that once made the glory of the Republic, and on the piazzetta the Austrian cannons and Hungarian grenadiers are guarding them."

The travellers returned home early in July, passing through Switzerland and Belgium. Ozanam's health was to all appearance restored, and he was impatient for the re-opening of his *cours* at the termination of the holidays.

CHAPTER XX.

1847.

We shall have occasion to speak of Ozanam's chief works collectively, but meanwhile we cannot forbear from making special mention here of that one which was the immediate fruit of this journey to Italy. *Les Poëtes Franciscains* was pronounced by several contemporary critics "a pearl without a rival." It is a book that has all the fascination of a poem combined with the reality of history; for in dealing with facts the author allows himself no poetic licence. Ozanam, wandering through the gay meadows and shadowy towns of Umbria, thrust his hand, as he says, "into the nest whence the eagles of Christian poetry were destined to take flight—Dante, Petrarch, and Tasso."

He traces the poetic ancestry of these eagles to the humble Franciscan friars. But before beginning his researches in the dim twilight of mediæval cloisters he descends into the gloom of the catacombs, and patiently explores their testimony; here every broken slab, every fragment of tomb and altar-stone, is a witness, speaking with authority, though often vaguely, in the obscure language of symbolism and allegory.

Following our guide through the intricate mazes of the galleries, lined with tombs and shrines, we reach the point where this "mural poetry" ceases; the poetic idea breaks forth in the true poetic utterance of verse, and henceforth

speaks no other. Soon we hear the poet Prudentius celebrating the catacombs and their martyrs in the metre of Virgil and Horace. Presently a new school of poetry, with a new civilisation, is about to emerge from these consecrated vaults which are undermining Rome. "While the walls of the Eternal City are shaken by the battering-rams, and the Goths and Vandals enter by the breach; while the barbarian hordes are sacking it, carrying off even to the leaden roofs of the houses and the brazen gates; at the very moment when all seems lost, the sacred sepulchres of the catacombs are upheaving through the soil, and produce those admirable basilicas of St. Paul, Sta. Maria Maggiore, and so many others, which, from the fourth to the thirteenth century, are a refuge, a shelter, and a protection for all the arts." They find another refuge in the popular sympathies; the hymns of St. Gregory and St. Ambrose are on the lips of the people, whose simple idiom was the destined vehicle of the poetic current which broke upwards from the catacombs. "The fable tells us," says Ozanam, in one of those happy images that were familiar to him, "that Mercury, when a child, was playing one day by the sea-shore, and, picking up a tortoise-shell from amongst the pebbles on the beach, he began to play upon it, and thus invented the first lyre. So, likewise, the genius of Italy picked up from the dust at her feet the humble idiom which was destined to be her immortal instrument." What charms him above all in this genius is that in becoming erudite and classical it does not cease to remain popular; each age of literature has its poetry of the people. It is this rich and delicate undergrowth that Ozanam purposes specially to explore. He does so conscientiously, leading us on to the thirteenth century, when the poet of Assisi arose, and, taking up the rustic instrument, breathed into it his wondrous inspirations, improvising for the people in their own familiar

idiom that incomparable canticle to "our brother, my lord the Sun," which marks a new era in Italian literature.

We know the story of the poet's early life; how he came to be called Francis, from his father's predilection for France, where he was travelling with his merchandise when the child was born; how the little Francis inherited his father's fondness for the country of the troubadours, whose language was the first his baby tongue was taught to lisp. It was the poetry of France that taught him the first notions of romance and chivalry. He learned there that there were two kinds of chivalry, one *terrienne*, or earthly, one *célestielle*, or heavenly. The knights of the *célestielle* sought glory and adventure, but in no earthly cause. Their example fired the ambition of Francis. At the age of twenty, being reputed the handsomest cavalier of Assisi, "the flower of its youth," he joined the Crusaders, and went forth to fight the infidel at Damietta; and having thus won his spurs in the ranks of the nobler knighthood, he sheathed his sword and returned to his native land, where the lady of his love awaited him. She was a mistress of cold and austere mien, beautiful in his eyes alone; but he loved her, and gave up all things for her sake. He served her with a life-long devotion, and sang to her in accents whose Divine beauty rises far beyond the reach of earthly passion and the inspiration of mere human art. Listen to his canticle to my Ladye Poverty and her crucified Spouse:—

"Lord! have Thou pity upon me, and upon my Ladye Poverty! And behold her seated on a dunghill; she, who is the queen of virtues, she complains because her friends have spurned her, and have become her enemies. . . . Remember, Lord, that Thou didst come down from the abode of the angels, in order to take her for Thy spouse, and to make her the mother of a great multitude of sons

who should be perfect. . . . It was she who received Thee in the stable and in the manger, and who, keeping company with Thee all through life, took care that Thou hadst not whereon to lay Thy head. When Thou didst begin the war of our redemption, Poverty attached herself to Thee like a faithful squire. She stood by Thy side during the combat; she did not forsake Thee when Thy disciples fled.

"When at last Thy mother, who followed Thee to the end, and took her share of all Thy sorrows—when even Thy mother could no longer reach to Thee, because of the height of the Cross, my Ladye Poverty embraced Thee more closely than ever. She would not have Thy Cross carefully fashioned, nor the nails in sufficient number, and pointed and smooth, but prepared only three, which she made blunt and rough, that they might better serve the purpose of Thy torture. Whilst Thou wert dying of thirst she refused Thee a little water, so that Thou didst expire clasped in the embrace of this Thy spouse.

"Oh! who then would not love my Ladye Poverty above all other things?"

The instinct of Catholicism alone can furnish the key to this Divine philosophy. Each age has its prevailing vice as well as its apparent beauty. The love of riches, the passion for gain, was the disease of the age of Francis, and he was raised up to testify against these evils, and recruit an army who would wage war on avarice, and restore to her throne "the queen of the virtues, who was seated on a dunghill."

This lover of poverty was an ardent lover of nature. When he claimed kindred with the stars and the flowers, with the sun and the moon, he gave utterance to his strongest human sympathies. In the merry days of his cavalier life he had filled the starlit streets of Assisi with the gay ditties and soft ballads of his native land; after

his conversion he awoke the echoes of the woods with the music of hymns and canticles. In his most ascetic days this predilection for music was never abandoned or condemned. At eventide the trilling of the nightingale would move him to respond in an outburst of melodious song, and the two would keep it up far into the night, until Francis, exhausted in the duet, would praise his conqueror for being so indefatigable in the praises of their common Lord, and retire, leaving him master of the silence. Once, when worn out with suffering in his last illness, he longed for a little music to "wake up joy in his soul," but the ascetic rule that he had adopted did not admit of this relaxation; the angels, however, heard his heart's desire, and the same night, as he lay in meditation on his couch of pain, a marvellous harmony, as of a flute of unearthly sweetness, filled the air. No musician was visible, but the sounds floated to and fro as of some one passing beneath the window. Francis, entranced by the music, thought for a moment that he had passed into the heavenly spheres.

He encouraged the love of music and song amongst the people, and taught them his own sweet poetry. His hymn to "Our brother, my lord the Sun," became, in course of time, the most popular in the land, and resounded far and wide, from dawn to sundown, through the valleys of Umbria. Children lisped it at their play, women sang it over their household work, old men murmured it at their cottage-doors, until the sweet strophes rose and fell through the sunny woods and vineyards, unceasing and spontaneous like the chirpings of our brothers the little birds; "for," as Ozanam remarks, "these Italians, who can go without clothes or food, cannot do without song and poetry." Though the canticle is so well known, we will give an imperfect translation of it here for the few who may not be acquainted with it:—

"Most high, most powerful and kind Lord, to whom belong all praise, glory, and benediction! They are due to Thee alone, because of all creatures, and chiefly for our brother, my lord the sun, who giveth us the day and the light! He is beautiful, and shines with a great splendour, and bears testimony unto Thee, O my God!

"Praised be Thou, my Lord, for our sister the moon, and for the stars! Thou hast formed them in the heavens, bright and fair.

"Praised be Thou, my Lord, for my brother the wind, for the air and the clouds, for the calm and for all weathers! for it is by this that Thou dost uphold all creatures.

"Praised be Thou, my Lord, for our sister the water, which is very useful, humble, precious, and chaste!

"Praised be Thou, my Lord, for our brother the fire! By him Thou dost illumine the darkness; he is beautiful and pleasant to see, dauntless and strong.

"Praised be my Lord for our mother the Earth, which supports and nourishes us, and brings forth fruits of divers sorts, the grass of the field and the variegated flowers!"

One day there arose a grievous dispute between the magistrates of Assisi and the bishops. St. Francis hearing of it was sorely distressed, and seeing that no one stood forth as a peacemaker, he added the following strophe to his canticle:—

"Praised be Thou, my Lord, because of those who forgive for Thy sake, and for love of Thee patiently bear infirmity and tribulation! Happy they who persevere in peace! for they shall be crowned by the Most High!" He then desired his disciples to go boldly to the principal notabilities of the town and beg of them to come at once to the bishops, and when they should all be assembled there, to sing in two choruses before the disputants the newly composed verse. The disciples obeyed him, and immediately,

when they had ceased singing, the adversaries asked pardon one of another, and embraced, with many tears.

Sweet St. Francis! Gentle brother of the flowers and the little birds! He met a peasant one day driving two lambs to the slaughter; it was mid-winter; the lover of poverty had only one cloak, but he took it off, and offered it to the peasant on condition that he would spare the life of the lambs.

He cherished the wild doves in his breast, he tamed the hungry wolf, he called the robins and the bullfinches to him, and bade them sing away merrily the praises of God; then he would bid them be silent while he and his brethren sang in their turn; they obeyed, and when the monks had recited the breviary the birds burst out into chirpings again.

But the time had come for Francis to leave this world and join in the songs of the blessed. Shortly before his death he fell into a gentle ecstasy, and, waking from it, composed a last verse to his canticle; he expired while the brethren were singing it:—

"Praised be Thou, my Lord; because of our sister, the death of the body, from which no man can escape! Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Happy they who at the hour of death are conformed to Thy holy will! For then the second death cannot hurt them.

"Praise and bless my Lord, give Him thanks, and serve Him with great humility."

The poetic mission of St. Francis, eclipsed during his lifetime by loftier and graver cares, only received its full recognition in the century after his death. He chose for his grave a hill-side, east of Assisi; it was the place where public criminals were put to death, and was called the Hill of Hell. Scarcely had his dust been laid in this unhallowed spot when some mysterious attraction began to draw the

minds and hearts of men there, and moved, so to speak, the very earth itself. Gregory IX. placed the name of Francis among the saints, and decreed that the place of his sepulture should be called the Hill of Paradise. Henceforth no honours were great enough for the beggar bridegroom of my Ladye Poverty. The nations vied with each other in bringing tributes of respect to his grave. He, who had left all things and become an outcast for God's sake, soon beheld a magnificent abode rising over his resting-place, grander than any palace he had dreamed of in the cavalier days of his youth. And, as if a divine inspiration came from the resting-place of the artist saint, those who drew near to adorn it were filled with a new artistic sense; they discarded the old Byzantine types, grand enough in their day, but now worn out and rapidly lapsing into decrepitude, after eight hundred years' service. They conceived a new and purer ideal, and thus made the sepulchre of Francis the cradle of a *renaissance* which was destined to advance to the highest point of perfection. Here Guido of Sienna and Giunta of Pisa broke loose from the trammels of the old Greek masters, softening and vivifying their hard immobility. Then came Cimabue, and after Cimabue, Giotto. "A whole *cortége* of artists follow after Giotto," says Ozanam, "and vie with each other in creating masterpieces to commemorate the sanctity of Francis and feed the piety of the simple population of the mountains, who daily come to say their prayers near his tomb." The inspiration which evoked this new school of painting and architecture sustained its first flights. "If I have dwelt long on this *renaissance* of the arts, it is because I discern in it the heralds of a great literary era. When I see a people carrying marble from the quarry, piling it up in colonnades, in ogives, and in steeples, covering the walls of its edifices with paintings and mosaics, not leaving a single corner without its emblem or

device,—when I see this, I believe that a thought is germinating in that people, revealing itself in architectural symbolism, translating itself more clearly in the outlines of drawing, and that it is on the eve of finding in language a more exact and harmonious expression. In the train of these great artists who have passed in procession before us, we shall see a young generation of poets coming down from the hill of Assisi." Ozanam passes the poets in review, beginning with Frère Pacifique, a deserter from the ranks of profane literature, where his triumphs had been crowned by the emperor himself, who placed on his head the ancient Roman laurel crown that was to encircle the brow of Dante and Petrarch.

After Brother Peaceful comes a poet of a far higher order, St. Bonaventure, whom Gerson styles "the most excellent master who ever appeared in the University of Paris." He wrote that exquisite work, which, Ozanam says, "only needs the form of versification to be called a poem,"—*The Legend of St. Francis.* The ascetic theologian here gives full play to the fountains of natural tenderness and poetry that are in his heart. In his description of the death-scene of the saint, there is one of those touches whose delicate grace betrays the instinct of the true poet: "The swallows, those little birds that love the light and hate the darkness, although the night was falling just as the holy man breathed his last sigh, came in a great multitude and perched upon the roof of the house, and remained there a long time, whirling about joyously, as if to render a signal and loving testimony to the blessed one who had so often invited them to sing the divine praises."

Passing on to Jacopone da Todi, Ozanam enters, not without some hesitation, as he admits, on the history of this extraordinary man, who passed from the cloister to the prison, and from the prison to the altar, to be venerated

as a saint. But painful as it is to him to describe a period when we see the Church on fire, and a great religious at war with the Pope, it is impossible, in a notice of the poets of the age, to pass by the author of the *Stabat.*

Jacques dei Benedetti was in the flower of his youth, the son of one of the richest men of Todi, an old cathedral town, suspended from the hill that overlooks the meeting of the Tiber and the Naga at the entrance of Umbria. He had squandered his father's almost boundless wealth, but being now a doctor of law, which in those days meant a person of importance and power, Jacques determined to set to work and repair the breach he had made in the paternal coffers. He was more successful than scrupulous in the pursuit of his object, and in a few years was richer than ever. To crown his prosperity he married the loveliest maiden in his native town, who brought him, in addition to her beauty, a splendid dower.

It fell out that in the year 1268 Todi was celebrating the public games. The beautiful young wife of the rich jurisconsult was there, seated in a high place among the noblest women of the town. Suddenly the gallery gave way, the cries of the unhappy women mingled with the crash of the falling wood and the music of lutes and viols. Jacques rushed forward, and seeing his wife among the victims, lifted her in his arms to a place of safety, and proceeded quickly to relieve her by opening her boddice, but with a blush she signified to him to wait until they were alone. He carried her to a distance, and there opening the golden tissue of her festive apparel, he discovered a hair-shirt. Before he could express his sorrow and surprise she expired in his arms. The last lesson of his beloved one was not lost on him. He guessed too truly whose sins and follies the rude instrument of penance was intended to expiate. What was there in her spotless life

to need such expiation? Jacques sold all his goods and distributed them to the poor, and then, like one distraught, wandered in and out of the churches dressed in rags. The people nicknamed him Jacopone—mad Jacques!—and pelted him as he passed, and mocked him. But Jacques took no heed of them. Like Jeremiah, who appeared in the public places of Jerusalem with a yoke round his neck to typify her approaching captivity, he showed himself at a public festival half-naked, crawling on his hands and feet, with saddle and bridle, like a beast of burden. The spectators grew pensive at the sight, considering to what a miserable estate that once envied destiny had fallen.

After ten years of this strangely heroic life, Jacopone knocked at the door of the Franciscan monastery and asked to be admitted. The monks hesitated long, but at last recognising that his madness was akin to that of their own St. Francis, they took him in. He entreated permission to retain his old nickname as the one most suitable to him; he refused the honour of the priesthood, because of his unworthiness, and entered as a lay brother, performing the most laborious and servile offices of the monastery. At last he obtained such complete mastery over his senses that it seemed as if he had now reached the goal, and that the race was at an end. It was here, on the contrary, that it in reality began.

When Pierre de Morrone was dragged from his Cenobite's cell and crowned Pope under the title of Celestine V., Jacopone addressed him an epistle in verse, in which he reminded him of the terrible exchange he had made in leaving the pious contemplations of his cell for the government of Christendom, and bade him remember that if he failed in his duty the curse of Christendom would be upon him. "I felt a great bitterness of pity for thee in my heart," he adds, "when there came forth from thy mouth

that word *I will*—that word which placed on thy neck a yoke heavy enough to make one dread thy damnation. Beware of incumbents. . . . Beware of those who embezzle the public money; if thou canst not defend thyself against them thou wilt sing a sorry song."

The Pope was so terrified by the picture Jacopone drew of the perils of the Pontificate, the tempest of human passions which he was called upon to control, that, overcome by a sense of his own weakness and the magnitude of the task, he fled back to his desert and could never be induced to return.

Benedict Gaetani was elected his successor, under the title of Boniface VIII. Two cardinals, Giacomo and Pietro Colonna, protested against the election, and drew up a deed summoning him to appear at the bar of the approaching Universal Council. Jacopone had the evil fortune to figure in this deed as a witness, and thus was included in the excommunication which fell upon the two rebellious cardinals. A period of struggle, humiliation, and misery now began for the ardent friar of Assisi, and only closed on the succession of Benedict XI. to the Papal throne, when the interdict was raised, and Jacopone, set free from his dungeon, went to end his days in peaceful captivity with his brethren at Collazone. Here, not long before his death, he composed that wonderful hymn to the Mother of Sorrows, the *Stabat mater* which would alone have made his name immortal; but there are many other fragments from the pen of the old *athlète* of penance which betray the quaint originality of his mind, as well as his impetuous love of God and tender sympathy for his fellow-men.

Jacopone, who was greater than all his predecessors, was to usher in the greatest of his successors. He was the herald of Dante. The *Divina Commedia* is like one of those vast Roman basilicas, which, not satisfied with admiring

it within and without, we are curious to explore to its very foundations. "You descend by torchlight to the sacred vaults," says Ozanam, "and discover the entrance of a catacomb which dives into the earth, dividing itself into many branches and spreading over an immense area. If you go through it to the end without losing your way or turning back, you come out at last into the open country, a great way off from the place where you entered."

All the lovers and commentators of Dante have indulged in these explorations of the sources and antecedents of the *Divina Commedia*, none more diligently, nor, we venture to assert, more fruitfully, than Ozanam. He shows us the Franciscan poets, more especially Jacopone, as opening the way to Dante by pointing out to him all that poetry might borrow from theology, and how much sweetness and beauty, as well as lofty wisdom, it might draw from the Divine metaphysics of the faith,—how inseparable, in fact, the highest kind of beauty is from the highest truth. Jacopone proved also, that no mysteries of faith are too sublime, no speculations of philosophy too subtle or too profound, to be adequately expressed in the popular idiom. It was he who, more than any of his brother poets, drew the attention of the world to the honeyed tongue of his native land; and if the *Divina Commedia*, instead of being written in the classical Latin of Virgil, was confided to the soft bastard Latin of the Italian people, the world owes it in a great measure to the mad penitent of Todi.

Perhaps it was some feeling of gratitude for this unconscious lesson, as much as for others better understood, which induced Dante to sing the praises of St. Francis in such jubilant accents, and to desire, after death, to be buried in the habit of his order, and at the foot of his tomb; or was the Christian poet prompted rather by the hope that he might find the judgment of God more lenient

if he presented himself at the mercy-seat in the livery of the poor; and that "the thunderbolt, which would not spare the laurels of the poet, would respect the badge of poverty"?

It is said that the great Alighieri was personally acquainted with Jacopone, and that when sent as ambassador to Philip le Bel he recited to the king some of the Franciscan's verses, where the latter stigmatises the policy of Boniface,—a boldness which excited such fierce resentment against the daring satirist, who was destined to expiate it in years of captivity. "Whether this be true or not, it is certain," remarks Ozanam, "that when Dante stood forth to address, not a king, but that mighty audience which centuries have gathered to him, he found the minds of men prepared by him who preceded him as a theological poet, as a popular poet, and as a satirist. . . ."

Ozanam passes on from the poems of Jacopone to the *Little Flowers* of St. Francis, a collection of legends written in prose, but breathing in every page the music of true poetry, and fragrant from the minds of St. Francis and his early disciples. They are anonymous, "it being the effort of mysticism to be forgotten of men before God," remarks the gleaner who presents them to us; and he adds, "Here I pass the pen to a hand more delicate than mine." Whilst he was plunged in the arid researches of the archives, this hand "more delicate than his" was culling the fragrant little flowers that grew in lowly spots along their road, and forming them into a bouquet whose perfume refreshed him in many an hour of weariness and pain. Perhaps the fact of their being translated by her whom he styled his Beatrice may have added another charm to those exquisite idyls in Ozanam's eyes, and account in a measure for the fascination which they possessed for him to the last. Less partial critics are however agreed that the *Little Flowers*

are rendered in French with a freshness, a *naïveté*, and a delicacy of touch scarcely surpassed in the original. It would carry us beyond our limits to enter on an analysis of the *Fioretti*, but we hope those of our readers who have not already seen this gem-like work will lose no time in making acquaintance with it; with the legend of the Wolf of Gubbio, that beautiful symbol of the Church purifying and disarming the bloody hand of the feudal power which weighed so cruelly on the people of the middle ages; with the banquet of St. Clare and Francis, and other scenes of their mystic and tender intercourse; with the docile little fishes who swam up to the sea-shore and listened, glistening on the silvery wave, while St. Anthony preached to them the mercies and the glories of God.

CHAPTER XXI.

1848.

In the autumn of 1847 Ozanam resumed his class at the Sorbonne with renewed zest and health almost completely restored. His holiday had not been a period of idleness, and he was comparatively satisfied with the result as regarded the work done. Writing to M. Foisset on this subject he says :—

"My two essays on *Dante* and *Les Germains* are for me like the two extreme points of a work which has been carried on partly in my public lectures, and which I should be glad to resume in order to complete it. It would include the literary history of the barbarous ages; the history of letters, and consequently of civilisation, since the Latin decline and the first commencements of Christian genius until the close of the thirteenth century. I should make it the subject of my lectures during ten years, if necessary, and if God leaves me life. These lectures would be taken down in shorthand, and would compose the book in its first form, which I should publish and recast at the end of every year. This method of proceeding would give to my written work some of that glow which I possess sometimes in the tribune, but which forsakes me too often in my study. It would also have the advantage of husbanding my powers by not dividing them, and by gathering up to the same end the little that I know and the little that I can do.

"The subject is admirable, for it includes the exposition of that long and laborious education which the Church gave to modern peoples. I should open with a volume of introduction, in which I should endeavour to set forth the intellectual state of the world at the advent of Christianity; what the Church could accept out of the inheritance of antiquity; how much she did accept, consequently the origin of Christian art and Christian science from the days of the catacombs and the early Fathers. All my journeys in Italy last year tended to this end.

"After this would come the picture of the world of the barbarians, pretty much as I have drawn it in the volume which awaits your criticism;[1] then their entry into the society of Christendom, and the prodigious labours of such men as Boetius, Isidore of Seville, Bede, Boniface, and others, who did not allow the night to close in, but carried the light from one end of the invaded empire to the other, making it penetrate into places and peoples that had remained inaccessible, and passing on the torch from hand to hand until it reached Charlemagne. I shall have to study the work of reparation accomplished by this great man, and to show that letters, which had not perished before him, did not die out afterwards.

"I would then show all the great things that were done in England in the time of Alfred, in Germany under the Othos, and this would lead me up to Gregory VII. and the Crusades. I should then have the three most glorious centuries of the middle ages: theologians like St. Anselm, St. Bernard, Pierre Lombard, Albert the Great, St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure; the legislators of the Church and State, Gregory VII., Alexander III., Innocent III., and Innocent IV.; Frederic II., St. Louis, Alphonsus X.; the entire quarrel between the priesthood and the empire; the communes,

[1] *Les Germains.*

the Italian republics, the chroniclers and historians; the universities and the *renaissance* of law; I should have all that chivalrous poetry, the common patrimony of Latin Europe, and, underlying this, all the epic traditions peculiar to each people, and which are the germ and beginning of the national literature. I should assist at the formation of modern languages; and my work would end with the *Divine Comedy*, the grandest monument of this period, its abridgment, as it were, and its glory.

"This is the scheme and purpose of a man who was very near dying eighteen months ago, whose health is far from being yet fully restored, still compelling him to all sorts of precautions, and whom you know, into the bargain, to be full of irresolution and weakness."

But this elaborate programme was about to be arrested by events composing a chapter of contemporary history, in which Ozanam was to be called upon to play his part. The Revolution of February was at hand, bringing in its wake lessons of deep import, many-sided and salutary warnings to such as could profit by them in the midst of the terrified disarray of the explosion. In France revolutions are like death: no matter how long they are watched for, when they come they are sudden and unexpected. Ozanam's attention had been very little directed towards politics; the study of the past absorbed so much of his time and thoughts that it left him small leisure for occupying himself with the present, except in his personal sphere of philanthropy and charity; but his mind was too philosophical, his mental vision too clear, too penetrating, not to discern the premonitory symptoms which were manifesting themselves around him; he repeated constantly that he was no politician, that he was not, never could be, "*un des hommes de la situation*," and in a sense this was correct. Nevertheless he was a true politician, inasmuch

that he judged politics like a Christian philosopher, who held a solid grasp of the great moral principles on which governments and politics should be conducted. In his opinion it was the social, not the political question, which should engage—for we may still speak in the present tense —the chief attention and utmost efforts of politicians in France, and he often regretted that such men as M. de Montalembert, for instance, devoted themselves so much to politics instead of working more exclusively at the solution of the social problems which were, and still are, the root of all revolutions in the country. His policy was to avert them, to prevent them by charity, by the extension of Catholic ideas, by the drawing together of the classes, by breaking down the barriers that separate them, and which, by separation, breed mutual mistrust, ignorance, envy, and resentment. This was what he had in view from the beginning of the foundation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. He meant its action to go far deeper than the alleviation, the moral help and improvement, of the individual poor. "A struggle is preparing between the classes, and it threatens to be terrible," he says, in a letter already quoted; "let us precipitate ourselves between these hostile ranks, so as to deaden the shock, if we cannot prevent it." In 1836 he wrote to his friend Lallier, "The question which agitates the world to-day is not a question of *political forms*, but a *social* question; if it be the struggle of those who have nothing with those who have too much, if it be the violent shock of opulence and poverty which is making the ground tremble under our feet, our duty, as Christians, is to throw ourselves between these irreconcilable enemies, and to induce one side to give, in order to fulfil the law, and the other to receive, as a benefit; to make one side cease to exact and the other to refuse; to render equality as general as it is possible amongst men; to make

voluntary community of possession replace taxation and forced loans; to make charity accomplish what justice and law alone can never do." He adhered to this political creed all his life. Twelve years later, on the eve of the "violent shock" which his far-seeing sagacity foretold, he repeats, as in his student days, "It is a social question; do away with misery, Christianise the people, and you will make an end of revolutions."

Soon after his return from Italy he made a speech at the Cercle Catholique, in which he described what he had witnessed in the Eternal City, the attitude of the Pope, the effect, so far, of his liberal policy on the Roman population, and the hopes and fears it embodied for Rome and for all the world. The speech, which was an enthusiastic eulogy of the pacific revolution which the Papal policy was effecting, ended with the words, "*Passons aux barbares! Suivons Pie IX!*" The Press caught up the expression with a hue and cry against Ozanam, and a hot controversy ensued between his party and the newspapers. He took no part in it, but contented himself with explaining privately to a few friends the real meaning of the contested sentence, which was, that he considered Pius IX. was now accomplishing what the liberal party all over the world had been working and waiting for for nearly a quarter of a century, and that it behoved Catholics to join in the movement, and follow the Pope, passing over with him to the barbarians, that is to say, "leaving the narrow camp of monarchs and statesmen, and going forward to the people, in order to draw them into the Church." The camp of the monarchs was perhaps too completely identified in Ozanam's mind with the *Grand Monarque*, who may be looked upon as the last of the monarchs of France,—the one in whose person their prestige culminated to its apogee, who treated the people as his property, and reduced society to a com-

munity of valets. Louis Quatorze, after deifying monarchy through half a century, gave the signal for its downfall and struck the funeral knell of the national freedom which was to find its grave under the ruins of the throne, plunging the nation headlong from the absolutism of kings to the absolutism of democrats, replacing the throne by the guillotine.

There may be some exaggeration in the extreme severity of historians of Ozanam's school in their judgment of the *Grand Monarque's* policy and character; there can be none in their opinion of its consequences, in their scorn for the slavish degradation of the human mind which the demi-god exacted from all around him, and to which may be traced one of the remote but certain causes of the subsequent national decline, the corruption of society, the absorption of manly independence, patriotism, and energy, in France. He it is who is mainly responsible for the contempt of the great for the people, the cruel oppression of the poor by the ruling classes, and all that series of corrupt grievances which ended in the mad licence of 1793, driving back the nation, as by a law of nature in France, under the yoke of despotism, until it again broke out in anarchy, and again fell back under the rule of armed force.

Ozanam, who persistently viewed the present in the light of the past, saw no remedy for this delirious see-saw game between despotism and communism but to Christianise the people, so that they should be capable of governing themselves, and thus pass effectually and for ever from under the unstable rule of kings.

The people had invaded the monarchy as the barbarians of old invaded the empire, making much havoc and desolation, laying waste fields and cities in their progress; but now the time had come for them to prove themselves the

saviours of the society they had overturned, and to build the peace of the world upon their conquest. It was necessary, in order to hasten this event, that those who governed the people should espouse their interests and their cause.

"When I say *Passons aux barbares*," explains Ozanam, "I mean that we should do as he (Pius IX.) has done; that we should occupy ourselves with the people, whose wants are too many and whose rights are too few; who are crying out, and fairly, for a share in public affairs, for guarantees for work, and against distress; who follow bad leaders, because they have no good ones, and whom we have no right to hold responsible for the *History of the Girondins*, which they don't read, nor for the banquets, where they don't feast. We may not succeed in converting Attila and Genseric, but, with God's help, we may make something of the Huns and the Vandals.

"Read the opening of the *City of God*, Salvian, Gildas, and you will find that even in the fifth century many saints had more sympathy with the Goths, the Vandals, the Arian and idolatrous Franks, than with the degenerate Catholics of the Roman cities. Honestly, did it not require some indulgence not to despair of the salvation of Clovis? . . . Don't believe those who find it easier to condemn a party, a people *en masse*, than to study the differences that divide them. . . . It grieves me, too, to hear people repeating the comparison between Pius IX. and Louis XVI., which is the pet thesis of the retrograde party, of the French and Austrian embassies in Rome, the thesis of all those who love neither the Pope nor liberty. How can he be compared even to St. Celestin? Have we seen him bending under the burthen? He is taunted with having had two secretaries killed under him! Do we not *all* know that the chief difficulty of a new era is to find new men; that the most terrible part of Pius IX.'s task is the political educa-

tion of his ministers and his people? He has not inherited from Sixtus V.; I know this quite well, and I rejoice at it. We must remount perhaps to Alexander III. to find a soul of the same metal as his."

But turning quickly from these incidental remarks on politics, Ozanam replunges, with a sense of pleasure and fitness, into the calm studies of the past. "Don't fear that I shall take to politics," he says to M. Foisset. "I find the time long until my strength shall enable me to take up the plan I have confided to you. I shall bless God if He allows me to bury my life in these dear studies. I must bless all the same if He condemns me to go on working as at present, only at intervals, and with wearisome precautions."

These lines were written on the 22d of February. On the 24th the Revolution broke out.

The general excitement, the upbreaking of terrible destructive forces through the calm surface, the uproar and universal confusion of these periodically recurring crises, are apt to disturb the presence of mind of the calmest. The most phlegmatic politicians fly before the storm, reformers lose faith in their life-long cherished theories, and let them go. Ozanam did not lose faith in his. When the tempest was let loose he clung to them more firmly than ever, trying to make his voice heard above the storm, that he might save the vessel and prevent her from riding to utter and irreparable destruction. He at once put on the uniform of a national guard and took his turn of duty at the post of peril with all good citizens. But this was not his proper place. He knew it, and repeated it to those who, considering only his gifts and personal influence, built hopes on him as a political leader in the new order of things. "You are wrong, my dear friend," he answers to M. Foisset's urgent entreaties in this direction; "you are

mistaken in fancying that I am one of the men for this emergency. I am less up than any one in the questions that are about to occupy the public mind, I mean the questions of labour, wages, industry, economy, more important than all the controversies of the politicians. The history even of modern revolutions is almost unknown to me. I shut myself up in the Middle Ages, which I studied with a kind of passion, and I believe it is there I found whatever little light is left me in the darkness of the present circumstances. I am not a man of action; I was born neither for the tribune nor the public squares. If I can do anything, however little, it is in my chair; or perhaps in the quiet of a library, where I may extract from Christian philosophy, from the history of Christian times, a series of ideas which I unfold to young men, to troubled and uncertain minds, in order to reassure, to reanimate, to rally them in the midst of the confusion of the present and the terrible uncertainties of the future.

"I may be mistaken, but it seems to me that the design of God is unfolding itself to us more rapidly than we thought; that the events of Vienna are the final explanation of those of Paris and Rome; and that we already hear a voice crying, 'Ecce facio cœlos novos et terram novam!' Since the fall of the Roman empire the world has seen no such revolution as this. I believe still in the invasion of the barbarians, but up to the present I see more Franks and Goths than Huns and Vandals. I believe, in fact, in the emancipation of oppressed nationalities, and I admire more than ever the mission of Pius IX., raised up so opportunely for Italy and for the world. In a word, I don't disguise from myself either the perils of the times or the hardness of hearts. I expect to see a great amount of distress, of disorder and perhaps pillage, and a long eclipse of literature, to which I had devoted my life. I

believe that we may be ground to powder, but that it will be under the triumphal car of Christianity."

He philosophised thus calmly on events and their final issue on the 15th of March—that is to say, when the Revolution was in full swing, three weeks after its outbreak.

His name had been immediately proposed on several lists as candidate for the forthcoming elections, but Ozanam declined the honour. A share, even passive, in the government, was a solemn responsibility for which he did not believe himself qualified. He might have allowed himself to be overruled as regarded his personal disability, but being better acquainted than most with the forces which the Catholics had at their disposal, he remained convinced that they were not strong enough to stand and conquer alone. "The best thing for us to do is to give our votes to the Republican candidates who share our faith, and who offer serious guarantees for our liberty," he says; but at the close of the same letter he adds,—"Just as I had finished this, there comes a letter from Lyons full of urgent entreaties to let my name appear amongst the candidates. They assure me that the division of parties and votes is so great that I run a very good chance of securing a majority. On the other hand, I have not very robust health to think of braving the storms of the Assemblée Nationale, and, moreover, my habit of public speaking is not at all of that kind which I should require in the Chamber. My friends here are divided. Some advise me to wait until the following Assembly. What do you think? I will wait till Saturday before writing to Lyons, so that your letter may reach me in time. Write by return of post."

We can only conjecture what M. Foisset's answer was from the result. Ozanam declined this offer, as he had done all previous ones. He did not, however, consider himself emancipated from that indirect share in the legis-

lation of the country which is the inalienable duty of every intelligent and patriotic citizen. He refrained from taking part in the war that was being carried on in the Chamber, but he entered the lists of another arena, where the voice of those who defend truth and all noble causes, finds a powerful and far-reaching echo. "My share in public life, from which no man should shrink to-day, is confined to the little I shall do in the *Ère Nouvelle*, which, it is decided, will appear on the 15th of April. If you come here (to Paris), as I hope, within a few weeks, you will soon understand why the *Univers* could not remain the sole organ of the Catholics. We must found a new work for these new times, one which will not provoke the same angry feelings and the same mistrust. Moreover, as there are various opinions amongst Catholics, it is better that they should be faithfully represented by various journals; and that, because of their very diversity, the Church of France should cease to be responsible for what passes through the brain of a journalist." This may be the place to say a few words about the part Ozanam himself played as a journalist.

CHAPTER XXII.

1848-49.

His first experience in journalism dates, as we have related, from the year 1832, when in his student days he wrote for the *Tribune Catholique*, and applied the proceeds to the weekly *quête* of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Simultaneously with that brave little paper, M. Bailly started a monthly magazine, called the *Revue Européenne*, which, like the *Tribune*, was kept going entirely by his own energy and the talent of his juvenile staff of contributors. Both publications did their work in their day, but it was restricted in many ways: funds were wanting, in the first place; in the next place, the apathy of the Catholics was in those days, as it still is, disastrous to every enterprise of the kind; the help that might have been easily given by a great number was withheld, from indifference, from want of apprehending the importance of the Press as a power within reach of their party. Then, again, the recent catastrophe of the *Avenir* was fresh in men's minds, and went far to paralyse whatever vitality and spirit of enterprise yet lingered amongst the Catholics. The *Avenir* had opened the lists of Catholic controversy, and for a moment fixed the attention of France, we might say of Christendom, on the interests of the cause; but the meteor which flashed so suddenly into fame had died out, leaving only a dark track upon the waters which its fiery brilliance had for a moment lighted up so vividly. M. de Lamennais' genius

had planted the Catholic flag on a pedestal, and, together with the eloquence of Lacordaire and Montalembert, compelled the attention of the country to its claims; men looked on as at a magnificent display of arms in a knightly tournament; they were dazzled and delighted, even when their sympathies were not with the combatants. But that was over now. The knights had carried their prowess too far, and were bidden to lay down their arms. A reaction of shyness and inertia had ensued; no one cared to reopen the lists which had been closed in such signal humiliation. M. de Lamennais, moreover, had towards the end infringed the laws of Catholic chivalry by the use of forbidden weapons. Hitherto religious controversy had, in all ages, been carried on with a strict regard to the claims of charity; even Bossuet, wielding his giant sword against the "reformers," never forgot this, but preserved in the heat of the fight that courtesy of form which is the safeguard of dignity and mutual respect. M. de Lamennais adhered to this precedent up to a certain point, up to the period of the reaction which followed on the second issue of his *Essai sur l'Indifférence;* then wounded pride imbittered his mind and warped his judgment; he was stung to fury by the just disapproval of the Catholics, and in his fierce self-defence began first to dip his pen into the vitriol with which he was soon to bespatter the Church he betrayed. Lamennais was the first to inaugurate in Catholic controversy that envenomed, violent, and aggressive style which has since become an institution in France, and done so much harm to charity, even when accompanied by well-meaning zeal and undeniable talent.

The *Avenir* fell, and the country was still reeling under the shock of the tremendous incident when Ozanam drew his maiden sword as a journalist in the modest little field of the *Tribune Catholique.* But he could not remain satisfied

with the scope he found here. Inexperienced as he was, he understood the immense importance for the Catholics of having an able organ of their own; he was continually deploring their mistaken policy in keeping their religion out of sight, as if it were strictly a private concern, whereas by making common cause in public they could create a party powerful enough to be a weight in the State, and thus force the Government to reckon with them.

From 1832 to 1833 the *Tribune Catholique*, on every available occasion, put forward this idea of the necessity of constituting the Catholics into a public body. They, however, listened with indifference, and gave no practical response. The urgent need of a daily Catholic paper was also brought before them, but with the same result. The latter design was nevertheless on its way to fulfilment from an unexpected quarter.

In the autumn of 1833, a priest named the Abbé Migne came to Paris with the idea of founding a Catholic journal. He had neither funds nor talent, but these slight disabilities did not daunt him. He was one of those men who have an indomitable faith in the success of their own ideas, and an energy which supplements all other wants. A friend of his, M. de la Tuilerie, who had accompanied him to Paris, inherited just at this moment a sum of £1400 from a devout relative, and it occurred to him that he could make no more appropriate use of the legacy than to devote it to found a daily Catholic paper under the Abbé Migne's management. He accordingly handed over the money for this purpose. The Abbé went to M. Bailly and consulted him as to how he should set to work. M. Bailly at once proposed that he should take the *Tribune Catholique*, and enlarge and improve it, instead of creating an entirely new journal. "Prenez mon ours," he said, pointing his argument with a familiar saying, "take the *Tribune*

Catholique, with its little knot of five hundred subscribers, and its zealous contributors, and let it appear daily and under a new name. This will be better than breaking new ground, building on nothing, and dividing the forces." The Abbé Migne closed with the offer, and the *Tribune Catholique* disappeared one day to come forth the next under the title of the *Univers*.

M. Bailly had undertaken to find writers, and he kept his word. The Abbé Gerbet had retired into complete obscurity since the suppression of the *Avenir*. He was living as he could, picking up a few francs here and there by teaching, very rarely by writing, and then anonymously. He was now in Paris casting about for work that would bring him a crust of bread. M. Bailly proposed to him to write a series of articles for the *Univers*, which the Abbé Migne should sign, it being necessary to conceal the real writer's name lest it should give a colour to the new journal which it did not mean to adopt. M. Gerbet assented joyfully, and on the 1st of November 1833 the first number of the *Univers* appeared with a leader on *La Toussaint*, whose lyrical beauty took all Paris by storm. It was signed *Migne, fondateur, administrateur, directeur*, and at once made a name for "this provincial Abbé who wrote like Fénélon," and attracted general curiosity to his paper. M. Gerbet continued for some time to write under the pompous editorial signature, and sustained the popularity which the first sensation had produced.

Ozanam, meantime, contributed his able and attractive articles with unflagging zeal, and a talent that was rapidly maturing by practice. Philosophy and history were his special subjects, and he made them the medium of that sustained defence of Catholic doctrine and calm logical controversy on Catholic principles and opinions which was so much needed, and which up to this time was unknown

in French journalism. A contemporary and fellow-worker of Ozanam's, who stands high amongst French men of letters of the present day, observed to the writer, speaking of the state of the press at this period, "Ozanam was the Providence of the Catholic press in France from 1833 to 1840; without his talent, and M. Bailly's energy, it would have utterly disappeared."

Ozanam all his life set immense store by the power of the press as an engine in the Catholic service, above all in his own country, where the nervous, impressionable nature of the people renders them so peculiarly sensitive to its action.

When the Revolution of February broke out, he saw no more efficacious barrier against the invading flood of revolutionary socialism than the influence of an enlightened press; and this belief induced him to start, with the co-operation of the Père Lacordaire, a new paper called the *Ère Nouvelle*, a democratic Catholic organ, whose mission it was to reconcile Catholics with the Republic.

The Père Lacordaire and he diverged widely in their political sentiments; Ozanam hailed the Republic as the probable and only possible salvation of the country; Lacordaire, like the great bulk of the Catholics, accepted it as a plank in the shipwreck of constitutional monarchy. What else was there to turn to? The elder branch of the Bourbons was not forthcoming, and the younger had snapped in their fingers like a rotten reed. Lacordaire, who passed, and still passes with many, for being an enthusiastic democrat, was not even a convinced republican. He declared publicly at the Union Club, on the 23d of February, the very eve of the Revolution, that he "had not an iota of republicanism in him." And not long after this he says again, "I did not agree with Ozanam's views. I did not wish to treat the question of democracy theoretically, but confined myself

to accepting the *fait accompli*, and drawing from it as much advantage as possible for religion and society. . . . I accepted the republic, which gave us the freedom of the schools and the freedom of religious bodies."[1]

The latter was indeed complete to a triumph, and calculated to plead loudly in favour of the new Government with the founder of the Dominican order in France. When, on the 4th of May, the National Assembly appeared on the peristyle of the Palais Bourbon to proclaim the Republic, the tonsured monk who stood in the midst of them, conspicuous by his white cowl, was cheered enthusiastically as he descended the steps, and conducted by the populace, in a sort of triumphal march, to the gates of the Corps Législatif.

This election was a source of immense satisfaction to Ozanam, who had been active in preparing it by his writings and his personal influence with the democratic Catholics. The event, however, when it did occur, was the spontaneous act of the Marseillais, without any intervention whatever, and caused great surprise to the Père Lacordaire himself, who was not even aware that his name had been proposed as candidate there.

Ozanam, meantime, carried on the good fight with his pen both in public and private. The Christianising of the people was now, as ever, his chief pre-occupation. "If a greater number of Christians, and above all of priests, had but occupied themselves with the working class these last ten years, we should be more secure of the future, and all our hopes rest on the little that has been done in this direction up to the present," he writes to his brother the Abbé; "I quite enter into your idea about the observance of Sunday. I will draw up a short notice on the subject myself, and have it distributed and pasted up, and perhaps

[1] Vide Montalembert, *Œuvres Complètes*, vol. ix. p. 520, "Le Père Lacordaire."

we may by this means stir up the working men to send in a petition about it themselves.

"On the other hand, I am going to have a meeting of Professors at my own house this afternoon, where we shall discuss the feasibility of founding public classes and a sort of night-school for these good fellows. The Carmelite priests will give us what help they can, and Monseigneur[1] gives us the premises.

"Keep me informed of what is being done in this line at Lille, and also what deputies the Catholics of the Nord are anxious to get into the Assembly.

"The first duty of Christians now is not to be frightened, and the second is not to frighten others, but on the contrary, to reassure the timorous, and to make them understand that the present crisis is like a storm that cannot last. Providence is still here, and we never see it allow these financial shocks, which shake the material order of societies, to last more than a few months. Let us not then be over-anxious about the morrow, saying, 'What shall we eat, and how shall we clothe ourselves?' Let us only have courage, and seek first the justice of God and the welfare of the country, and everything else will be given to us over and above."

It required a courage as firmly rooted in supernatural trust as Ozanam's to remain serene and undisturbed, meantime, until the shock had passed away. A rising at Lille caused him some alarm for the safety of his brother; but this personal anxiety did not disturb his judgment of events or cast his patriotic pre-occupations into the shade. "If the workmen of Lille would but imitate the moderation and wisdom of their brothers of Paris and Lyons!" he exclaims. "Here we are in this great and opulent metropolis for the last seven weeks without a government or a regular police force, and yet we hear of no more murders, robberies, or

[1] Affre.

other misdemeanours than before. Don't believe those evil-minded persons who go about spreading absurd stories; there is not a word of truth in them, and nothing is more contrary to the dispositions of the population of Paris, who on every occasion seek to show respect to religion and sympathy to the clergy. My friend the Abbé Cherruel, who has blessed thirteen trees of liberty, has been quite affected by the proofs of faith which he found amidst this people, where, since 1815, the priest has been taught to see only enemies of God and of the Church.

"Occupy yourself as much with servants as with masters, with workmen as much as with employers. This is henceforth the *only* means of salvation for the Church of France. The *curés* must set aside their pious parish congregations, little flocks of good sheep in the midst of an enormous population to whom the parish priest is a stranger. He must henceforth occupy himself, not only with the indigent, but with that immense class of poor who do not ask for alms, but who are, nevertheless, attracted by special preaching, by charitable associations, by the affection that is shown to them, and which touches them more than we think. Now, more than ever, we ought to meditate on a beautiful passage in the second chapter of the Epistle of St. James, which seems as if it had been written expressly for these times."

Ozanam addressed the same exhortations, with the same unflinching boldness, to the clergy generally that he used towards his brother. The *Ère Nouvelle* had gained the popular ear, and was to him the medium of the propagation of Christian democratic principles. "Priests of France, do not be offended at the freedom of speech which a layman uses in appealing to your zeal as citizens!" he exclaims. "Mistrust yourselves, mistrust the habits and customs of a more peaceful period, and have less doubt of the power

of your ministry and its popularity. It is true, and we recognise it proudly, that you love the poor of your parishes, that you welcome with charity the beggar who knocks at your door, and that you never keep him waiting when he calls you to his bedside. But the time is come for you to occupy yourselves with those other poor who do not beg, who live by their labour, and to whom the right of labour and the right of assistance will never be secured in such a manner as to guarantee them from the want of help, of advice, of consolation. The time is come when you must go and seek those who do not send for you, who, hid away in the most disreputable neighbourhoods, have perhaps never known the Church or the priest, or even the sweet name of Christ. Do not ask how they will receive you, or rather ask those who have visited them, who have ventured to speak to them of God, and who have not found them more insensible to a kind word and a kind action than the rest of mankind. If you fear your inexperience, your timidity, the insufficiency of your resources, unite in associations. Take the benefit of the new laws to form yourselves into charitable confraternities of priests. Use all the influence you have with Christian families, and urge them to give; press them in season and out of season, and believe that in compelling them voluntarily to despoil themselves you are sparing them the unpleasant process of being despoiled by ruder hands. Do not be frightened when the wicked rich, irritated by your pleading, treat you as communists. They treated St. Bernard as a fanatic and a fool. Remember that your fathers, the French priests of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, saved Europe by the Crusades; save her once more by the crusade of Charity, and, as it involves no bloodshed, be you its first soldiers."[1]

Then turning to the wealthy classes, he says, "Rich men—

[1] Vide *Extraits de l'Ère Nouvelle*, vol. vii. p. 272.

for if your numbers be diminished, we still know whole provinces which the general distress has scarcely touched. . . . You were justified, during the first days of a revolution whose limits no one could foretell, in thinking of your children and husbanding carefully the provision that the chances of exile and spoliation rendered necessary. But foresight has its limits, and He who taught us to pray for our daily bread, nowhere advises us to secure to ourselves ten years of luxury. . . . Spend; do not deny yourselves legitimate amusements at a moment when they may be meritorious; perform almsdeeds by furnishing work as well as help; do not be afraid that you will injure small trade by clothing out of your coffers those thousands of poor who assuredly will buy neither clothes nor shoes for the next six months; give to the asylums and the schools, and do not forget those houses of refuge, convents of the Good Shepherd, compelled by poverty to reduce their penitents to a fourth and a *tenth* of the usual number, and thus close the door to repentance when God is opening to it the gates of Heaven." . . .[1]

"Representatives of the people,—we respect the magnitude and the difficulty of your task, . . . but do not plead want of time. Under the fire of the insurrection the National Assembly borrowed from the night the time the day denied it. We saw you on the barricades haranguing the insurgents, encouraging the defenders of order. . . . How comes it then that we do not see you at the post of peril now? Why do you not rescue your mornings from the crowd of petitioners who besiege you, and go and visit those wretched districts, and climb those dark staircases, and penetrate into those naked rooms, and see with your own eyes what your brothers are suffering? You would in this way become acquainted with the utter destitution that

[1] *Extraits de l'Ère Nouvelle*, vol. vii. p. 274.

reigns amongst them; you would leave behind you to these poor creatures the memory of a visit that had honoured, and at the same time consoled their wretchedness, and you would come away penetrated with an emotion which brooks no delay. . . . And do not plead want of money. If the ordinary resources should come to fail you, if there should be nothing more to hope for from credit and reserve funds, hope everything still from the generosity of France. Open a national subscription for the workmen out of work—not only those of Paris, but of the whole country; let your nine hundred names figure first on the list of its patrons and promoters; let the bishops who sit in the Assembly invite their colleagues and the thirty thousand *curés* of France to proclaim the subscription in all the pulpits; let the Minister of the Interior order the forty thousand mayors to placard it and popularise it in all the communes; let it be made a question of security for the timorous, of patriotism and charity for all. Take in kind as well as money, and I promise you there is not a banker who will refuse you a bank-note, not a peasant but will bring you his handful of wheat."[1]

The extraordinary confidence which Ozanam displayed in an emergency like the present is the more striking, from the contrast it presents with the almost morbid nervous anxiety that was habitual to him; but in a national crisis his personal individuality in some sort disappeared. He did not think of himself, or measure chances by his individual power and resources. He looked at himself only as a unit bound up in the grand whole of France, and his trust in her, in her elastic vitality, her moral soundness at the core, her energy, intelligence, and *élan*, was only second to his trust in God.

Personally he did not know what fear was. This courage

[1] *Extraits de l'Ère Nouvelle*, p. 277.

was shared by his wife. "Thank God! Amélie is courageous," he says to more than one friend, whom he keeps informed of their position during the outbreak; and he constantly congratulates himself on finding a support instead of a hindrance in her presence throughout.

"Amélie will have set your mind at rest about us," he writes to the Abbé Ozanam. "She will have told you that we were safe and sound, although we were in terror for Charles Soulacroix, who has been three times under fire. As for me, my detachment was stationed nearly all the time at the corner of the Rue Garancière and the Rue Palatine, then at the corner of the Rue Madame and the Rue Fleurus. We had a good many false alarms; shots were fired in the neighbouring streets, and we had to patrol the Boulevards at some risk, but, thank God, we did not pull a trigger. My conscience was in order, so I should not have shrunk before the danger. I confess, nevertheless, that it is a terrible moment when a man embraces his wife and child with the feeling that it is perhaps for the last time."

Ozanam once experienced this "terrible moment" under circumstances of peculiar interest. One Sunday morning, on the 25th of June, he was on duty as a national guard with M. Bailly and M. Cornudet at a post in the Rue Madame, the three friends were conversing on the sinister prospects which the prolongation of the struggle brought nearer every day; suddenly it occurred to them that the mediation of the Archbishop of Paris might avail, if he could be induced to exert it, and become the peacemaker in this disastrous civil war. They started immediately to communicate the idea to the Abbé Buquet, his Grace's Vicar-General, who was just then attending his mother's death-bed close by Ozanam's house. He warmly approved of it, and gave them a letter in a large official-

looking envelope, which might, in case of need, serve as a pass through the barricades to the Archbishop's abode. It was mid-day when Ozanam came home, and told his wife the mission he was bound for. Her first impulse was one of natural wifelike terror—"You are going straight to your death! You must not do it. I implore you not to go!" she cried; but Ozanam calmly proceeded to explain to her the considerations which made it impossible for him to do otherwise: the insurrection was now overcome everywhere except in the Faubourg St. Antoine, where the strife continued as fierce as ever; this was the manufacturing quarter, the centre of the workmen and artisans, and while it held out there was no chance of security being restored to the city. Now if the Archbishop of Paris went forth bearing the olive-branch, and the rebels accepted it, it would be, not only an immense mercy to all, but a glorious triumph for the Church. Madame Ozanam yielded without further opposition to these arguments, though not, we may presume, without one of those inner struggles and bloodless victories which brave souls only know.

The three friends set off to the Archbishop. After hearing the motive of their visit, he said with simplicity, "I have been pursued by the same idea since yesterday, but how can it be done? How could we manage to reach the insurgents? Would General Cavaignac approve of the step? And where is he to be found?"

The three gentlemen answered all these objections, and assured his Grace that he would be received all along the road with respect by the population.

"Very well," he replied. "Then I will just slip on my short cassock, so as not to be noticed, and you will show me the way."

As he was leaving the room a priest came in in great excitement, full of the fearful details of the insurrection, to

which he had just been a witness. Monseigneur Affre listened with some emotion, but without flinching in his résolution. In a few minutes he was ready; but the three laymen, as if prompted by some presentiment of the triumph that awaited him, ventured to suggest that he should wear his violet soutane and let his archiepiscopal cross be visible on his breast. He replied with the same simplicity as before, "You think that would be better? Well, then, I will put on my violet soutane."

The populace did not belie the promise of Ozanam and his companions. Nothing could exceed the veneration, the enthusiasm with which the Archbishop was greeted on his way through the streets; it was a triumphal march from the Ile St. Louis to the Assemblée Nationale. The troops, the national guard, the garde mobile flew to arms and sounded the call; the men stood bareheaded, the women and children knelt down. It was a soul-stirring sight, for the homage was unanimous and spontaneous, as if every one guessed instinctively that the Prelate appeared in the midst of that vast armed multitude for some mighty purpose.

General Cavaignac received him with every mark of admiration and respect, gave him a proclamation to the insurgents, and a final offer of mercy if they laid down their arms. At the same time he warned him of the danger he was going to run. He told him that General Brea, who had been sent with a flag of truce, had just been taken by the insurgents. The Archbishop listened without showing the least emotion, and the General and those present were deeply affected by the simplicity with which he replied, "I am going" (*Je pars*).

Ozanam, in referring to this to him most painful episode, always spoke with admiration of the extraordinary placidity, the coolness, amounting almost to indifference, which Monseigneur Affre displayed from first to last. There was no

enthusiasm; he was not carried away and uplifted by any feeling of "exaltation;" he was going simply to fulfil what he believed a duty, and he went forth to the mission with a perfectly clear perception of its danger. On leaving the residence of General Cavaignac he requested Ozanam and his two friends to allow him to return home alone. They protested, but seeing him determined they feigned to accept the dismissal, and said goodbye, but continued to follow him at a little distance. He guessed how it was, and turning round instinctively when they came to the Pont des Saints Pères, he waited for them to come up, and then entreated them to go away, as their uniform of national guards gave them the appearance of an escort, which, under the peculiar circumstances, might prove a hindrance to his mission. They yielded to this argument, and took leave of him with sorrow and anxiety. It was not that they had any presentiment of the terrible risk that he was running, but they thought their presence would be a moral support, and they could not bear to let him go on quite alone.

The Archbishop returned to his palace amidst the same demonstrations of sympathy wherever he was recognised. On reaching home he was exhausted by the long walk, and, after taking some refreshment, was persuaded to lie down and rest. After this he went to confession, like a man about to meet death. He left some few written directions, and then set out to the Faubourg St. Antoine, accompanied by his Vicars-General, the Abbé Jacquemet and the Abbé Ravinet. As they went along he commented on the text, "The good shepherd giveth his life for his flock." He continued still in the same state of placid calm, as if taking a walk for ordinary purposes. We know how it ended—how the olive-branch was changed into the palm, and how the mission terminated in martyrdom for the good shepherd. As they approached the Place de la Bastille, a young man

named Brechemin, who had been following them for some time, tied his handkerchief to the branch of a tree, and went before them, holding it aloft, to the nearest barricade. The Archbishop climbed up, holding the promise of pardon in his hand, when a shot was fired from a window just above him, and he staggered back wounded to death, exclaiming, as he fell, "May my blood be the last shed!"

It was about seven in the evening, but owing to the disorder and excitement which ensued, the event was not known in the city until the next day, when the news was received with a universal cry of dismay, horror, and grief. It fell, as may be imagined, with indescribable distress, amounting in the first moments to an agony of remorse, on Ozanam and his two companions; nor was it until the storm had passed away, and they were enabled to look at events in their true proportions, that they were consoled for their involuntary share in the catastrophe. It is more than probable that, even if they had not gone to the Archbishop, he would have acted on the impulse which, as he told them, had been pursuing him since the previous day, and gained his crown through some other instrumentality. His dying prayer was heard: his death seemed to deal the last blow at the insurrection, and his blood was, as far as we know, the last shed in this fratricidal war; for it was not a revolutionary riot, an *émeute*, but, as Ozanam said, "a civil war, that is to say the most implacable of all wars, and which only waits for an opportunity to break out afresh."

Ozanam was disappointed but not crushed by the results of the Revolution. "You know," he writes to M. Foisset, "that I have always belonged to what M. Lenormant calls *the party of hope*. I believed, I still believe, in the possibility of Christian democracy; in fact, I believe in nothing else as far as politics are concerned. I have poured out

the overflow of my heart in an article *aux gens de bien*, which you have perhaps read." This article, from which we have already quoted, ends with the following appeal:—"Beware,—for this is the peril of loyal souls and noble hearts—beware of despairing of your age; beware of that faintheartedness, which leads so many to give up all effort when witnessing, as they say, the decline of France and of civilisation, and who, by dint of announcing the approach of the country's ruin, end by precipitating it."

It was not indeed a moment to give up effort, but, on the contrary, one which called peremptorily for strenuous exertion. *Chômage*,[1] that untranslatable word so full of terrors to the Government, was abroad all through the country, reigning like a ghastly potentate among the populations of the large manufacturing towns and in the rural districts, defying all efforts to cope with it, and accumulating distress to a degree which justified the worst fears of the Pessimists, and explained that touching exclamation of a Sister of Charity to Ozanam, "Oh yes, I fear death, but not near so much as the coming winter!"

He was indefatigable in his endeavours to communicate this fear to those who might yet help to avert its worst realisation, and trumpeted forth warnings, appeals, schemes, and denunciations day after day in the columns of the *Ère Nouvelle*. "This newspaper takes up every moment of time that I can snatch from the examinations just now," he writes to his brother on the 3d of July. "I have written five long articles this week. It is true, that in the midst of the excitement of recent events I am incapable of any other work. We have, moreover, the consolation of feeling that we are doing some good, for they have been selling eight thousand copies a day in the streets of Paris." It was not quite true to say that he found time for nothing else than the duties

[1] The standing still for want of work.

of professor and journalist. He never let a day pass without going to visit the poor and that immense population of workmen whom the *chômage* had reduced to misery and starvation in the great metropolis. This was the enemy whom the *gens de bien* had now to fight against and conquer under penalty of seeing it rise up presently more fierce and exasperated than before. "Now is the time for you to begin your war," says Ozanam; ". . . now that the troops are no longer bivouacking on the Boulevards, and that peace has succeeded to the storm, it is right we should make our voice heard, and proclaim those truths which have ceased to be dangerous, and to address to good citizens a page which there is no longer any fear of the evil ones picking up and turning into cartridges for the guns on the barricades. It is said that the *gens de bien* have saved France, and it may be true, for they comprise France herself, minus the egotists and the factious. . . . But it is not enough to save France once or several times; a great country wants to be saved every day. You go and come from one end of the city to the other now in peace and security, but the danger which you flatter yourselves has disappeared from the streets is hid away in the garrets of the houses on either side. You have crushed the insurrection; you have now to deal with an enemy with which you are not acquainted, which you dislike hearing spoken of, and about which we are determined to speak to you to-day—*misery!* . . . Two months have now elapsed since trade has been in enjoyment of that peace which was to restore it to life, and yet in Paris alone the number of individuals out of work amounts to *two hundred and sixty-seven thousand!* They get assistance, it is true, and this fact lulls your conscience and your alarms to sleep; but those who have the privilege of distributing the public help are less reassured. They go, for instance, to the twelfth arrondissement, one of the

strongholds of the insurrection, and out of about ninety thousand inhabitants they find eight thousand families inscribed on the list of the benevolent fund, twenty-one thousand nine hundred and ninety-two who receive extra help, making a total of some seventy thousand individuals who are living on the precarious bread of alms. Half of this district, all the Montagne Ste. Geneviève, and all the neighbourhood of the Gobelins, is composed of narrow, crooked streets, where the sun never penetrates, where a carriage could not venture without risk, and where a man in a coat never passes without making a sensation, and attracting to the door-steps groups of naked children and women in rags. On either side of a filthy sewer rise houses five stories high, many of which shelter fifty families. Low, damp, and noxious rooms are let out at one franc and a half a week when they have a fireplace, and one franc and a quarter when they have not. No paper, often not a single piece of furniture, hides the nakedness of the wretched walls. In a house of the Rue des Lyonnais we ourselves saw ten married couples without even a bed. One family lived in the depths of a cellar, with nothing but a handful of straw on the earthen floor, and a rope fastened from wall to wall, from which the poor creatures hung their bread in a rag to keep it out of the reach of the rats. In the next room a woman had lost three children from consumption, and she pointed in despair to three others who awaited the same fate. The upper stories presented the same consoling aspect. Right under the roof a garret without windows, only pierced with two holes, each closed by a pane of glass, afforded shelter to a tailor, his wife and eight children. Every night they crawled on their hands and feet to the straw that was spread by way of a couch at the extremity of the garret, close under the slanting roof. We need not dwell on those amongst them who are better off;

those who, for six persons, can supply two beds, into which are huddled *pêle-mêle* the sick and the healthy, boys of eighteen with girls of sixteen. The most fortunate of these wretched beings want food of some sort, and if they die of consumption let it not be said that they perish from hunger in the most civilised city of the world. . . . And here at least there is no room for that ready excuse of the hard-hearted, that the poor are wretched by their own fault, as if the want of light and of morality were not the most deplorable and crying of miseries for every society that wishes to live! Here, when the visitor accompanies the official help by a kind word that pleads for its humiliating insufficiency, he finds, the more he penetrates into the intimacy of the poor, that they have more blame than sympathy for the insurrection, and that they regret the workshops far more than the club. Even the small number of diseased minds that still cherish dreams of incendiarism generally yield to a friendly and sensible conversation, and end by believing in those virtues, the very names of which they had been taught to execrate—charity, resignation, patience. Amongst these inhabitants of the Faubourgs, whom it is the custom to represent as a people devoid of all faith, there are very few who have not a cross at the head of their bed, a picture, or a bit of blessed palm—very few who died at the hospital of their wounds of June without having opened their arms to the priest and their hearts to forgiveness. In these foul cellars and garrets, sometimes next door to sloth and vice, we have often come upon the loveliest domestic virtues, on a refinement and intelligence that one does not always meet with under gilded ceilings;—a poor cooper, of past seventy years of age, tiring his infirm arms to get bread for the child of a son who had died in the flower of his age; a deaf and dumb boy of twelve, whose

education has been carried on by the self-devotion of his poor relatives, with such success that he begins to read, and knows God, and prays. We shall never forget one poor room, of irreproachable cleanliness, where a mother, clothed in the threadbare costume of her native place, Auvergne, was working away with her four daughters, modest young girls, who only raised their eyes from their work to answer the stranger's questions. The father was nothing but a hodman, working by the day at a mason's; but the faith which these honest people had brought with them from their native mountains illuminated their lives, just as the sunbeam that stole in through their tiny window lighted up the pious pictures pasted on the walls." [1]

This description of the pariahs of the Faubourgs was no highly-coloured picture drawn to excite interest in their misery; it was the truth, free from the least conscious exaggeration. We find many passages of Ozanam's private correspondence which fully corroborate the public statement both as regards the fearful sufferings of the poor and the admiration which their virtues frequently excite in the writer's mind. " . . . If I turn wearily from the controversies that are agitating Paris, I am torn to pieces by the sight of the misery that is devouring it," he says to M. Foisset. " The Society of St. Vincent de Paul finds grave duties here, and it may be that God has permitted its rapid development only that it might be ready for the task He was preparing for it. Besides, it is well to see on their own hearth, disarmed, and surrounded by their wives and children, these poor fellows whom one has seen at the clubs and on the barricades. One is astounded to find how much Christianity there still is amongst this people, consequently how much there is to work upon. Ah, if we only had some saints! But can we doubt that God has a few in reserve

[1] *Extraits de l'Ère Nouvelle*, p. 265.

for a century to which He has given Pius IX. and the Archbishop of Paris?

"Let us pray, and let us not fancy that the end of France has come; for at the present moment the end of France would be the end of the world. When we look around us, where is there a sound spot on the face of the earth? where do we see a people that are not as grievously diseased as ourselves? And yet can we suppose for a moment that the temporal destinies of Christianity have reached their final issue, and that God has nothing more to do with the world except to judge it? This is what the Legitimists said in 1830, this is what you and your party strove so hard to prevent us all saying, this is what I trust and hope I shall never say, not if I saw the whole of modern society perish, assured, as I am, that it would cost God less to raise up a new race, a new society, than to limit the work of His Son's blood to the little that these eighteen centuries have seen accomplished!"

Ozanam had started a sort of crusade against this gospel of despair, and the popularity which the *Ère Nouvelle* met with in all ranks and parties showed that the deepest public sympathies were with him, and that the people responded at heart to his propaganda of hope. He did not confine himself to pointing out the evil, his chief aim was to discover its radical causes, and by this means to suggest and compel the remedy. He believed that great things might be done for society by improving its existing conditions, but not by violently overturning them. "It is within, not without, that we must seek for the sources of men's happiness and its principal enemies," he declares; "and we shall have done nothing, absolutely nothing, so long as we have not carried light and reform into those internal disorders which time does not right, which are more incurable than diseases, which last longer than the *chômage*, and go on

multiplying pauperism long after the grass of the graveyard has effaced the last traces of civil war.

"God did not make the poor; He sends no human creatures into the chances of this world without providing them with those two sources of riches which are the fountain of all others—intelligence and will. . . . Why should we hide from the people what they know, and flatter them like bad kings? It is human liberty that makes the poor; it is it that dries up those two primitive fountains of wealth, by allowing intelligence to be quenched in ignorance, and will to be weakened by misconduct. The working men know it better than we do. . . . God forbid that we should calumniate the poor whom the Gospel blesses, or render the suffering classes responsible for their misery, thus pandering to the hardness of those bad hearts that fancy themselves exonerated from helping the poor man when they have proved his wrong-doing. . . . Of the three passions which are the ruin of popular morals, gambling, wine, and women, France, to her eternal honour be it said, has banished the first, and opened the *Caisses d'Epargne*,[1] with the same hand that closed the door upon lottery-offices and gaming-houses. . . . But while we have put crushing taxes on salt, meat, and all necessaries of life, we have not yet discovered in the arsenal of our fiscal laws the secret of arresting the multiplication of distilleries, of raising the price of alcoholic liquors, of restricting the sale of those detestable, adulterated, poisonous drinks that cause more sickness than all the rigours of the seasons, and make more criminals than all the injustice of men combined. What reforms have you introduced into the public amusements of this Parisian population, so infatuated about pleasure, so ready to let itself be led to the ends of the earth, not with

[1] Savings-banks for the poorer classes, protected and managed by the State.

bread, as it has been said, but with amusement? Last winter the Prefecture of Police delivered *four thousand licences for night balls.* The State puts no limit to those unhealthy diversions, which the good sense of our fathers contracted within the six weeks of the carnival. Every year it authorises the opening of a new theatre in some wretched haunt of the Faubourgs, where the sons and daughters of the people are fed nightly upon the scum of a literature whose cynicism would revolt the chastity of the opera pit. And when, for six months of the year, the youth of the working classes have spent their evenings and their nights in these horrible dens, where their health runs as much danger as their morals, you are surprised to see them turn out miserable, puny creatures, incapable of supplying the military contingent, but supplying innumerable recruits every year to the prisons and the hospitals! Let us not imagine we have done our duty by the people when we have taught them to read and write and count. . . . When it was a question of crushing out the last embers of the insurrection there was no need of delays and formalities to pitch twenty camps on the Boulevards of Paris, and up to the very doors of the Hôtel de Ville; and here we are, after four months, when in the twelfth *arrondissement* alone there are four thousand children without shelter,—here we are still struggling amidst adjournments, motions and debates, fighting to overcome I know not what scruples of committees, boards, administrations, and the rest of it, who are terrified that the State will be ruined and overturned if the education of the young *ouvriers* is confided to Sisters and Brothers, to teachers capable, that is, of teaching them something more than how to spell out the syllables of the newspaper, and to scrawl the *ordre du jour* of the barricades on the wall with a piece of coal!"[1]

[1] *Extraits de l'Ère Nouvelle*, p. 287.

In spite of Ozanam's protests that he was no politician, we cannot read these social articles without feeling that he possessed the truest instinct of a politician, if politics mean the science of governing wisely and well; they are, in fact, an exposition of those principles of Christian democracy which, however utopian they may sound, he considered the best practical solution to the difficulties of civilised states.

The newspaper in which these articles appeared was short-lived. There is something almost pathetic in the story of the enterprise, born, as it was, of an impulse of hope and patriotism, in an hour of national shipwreck, and killed, not by the Revolution or the Government, but by the apathy and discord of the very party whom its mission was to serve and to enlighten. The *Ère Nouvelle* gave a voice to the party of hope, and held out a beacon to those Catholics who, instead of despairing amidst the perils that surrounded them, endeavoured to secure the triumph of the Church in the triumph of democracy. But it was misunderstood by some, attacked by the other journals of the party, until at last, seeing that its mission had become impossible, and that it could only exist by fighting, not for or with, but against its own, it withdrew from the lists, leaving behind it, in a few intelligent and grateful minds, the memory of a brave career and the echo of a voice that had faithfully spoken the truth, irrespective of parties.

The Père Lacordaire and Ozanam received many touching testimonies when it was announced that the journal was about to be suspended. One was characteristic enough to be worth mentioning. A freethinker of Ozanam's acquaintance wrote to him, condoling with him on the vexations to which he had been subjected from many quarters, and expressing, in terms as sincere as they were glowing, his admiration for the talent and noble sentiments with which

the *Ère Nouvelle* had been conducted. Ozanam was surprised by this unexpected proof of sympathy, and made the following answer:—"... Permit me to say, my dear colleague, that if, instead of remaining outside, on the threshold of Christianity, you had, like me, the happiness to live within it, and to have studied it for eighteen years, if you had gone beyond Bossuet, who undoubtedly represents a portion and an epoch of the Church, but with the errors of his time; if you had fed on those great doctors of the Middle Ages, those Fathers whose works would be a study so worthy of your noble intellect, you would not trace to the Revolution either liberty, or tolerance, or fraternity, or any of these grand political dogmas which have been claimed by the Revolution, but which descend from Calvary. You would find, for instance, that my opinion concerning the intervention of the secular arm agreed with St. Bernard's, St. Martin's, and St. Ambrose's, that the Inquisition of Spain, sustained by the Spanish kings, was blamed and disowned by the Popes, and that the greater number of heresies unsheathed the sword before it was raised against them. And since you speak so kindly of the *Ère Nouvelle*, I may add, that if you knew more about it, if you knew the encouragement we have received from Pius IX., from the Archbishop of Paris, and the most estimable members of the clergy of France, you would not represent to yourself the few intelligent Catholics you imagine us to be as a little school of theosophists, founded on the ruins of the old creed, and trying to build up out of its fragments a religion after their own fashion and on their own level.

"No, you must not attribute to me an honour that I repudiate, that of being better than my Church, which is yours also. For it is to your Catholic mother and your forefathers that you owe the traditions of Christian education, that you owe that nobility of soul, that delicate straight-

forwardness, that staunch honesty, that have always drawn me to you.

"You rate me too high, and you know me imperfectly, when you assume that I am alone, or nearly so, in an order of ideas which inspire you with esteem. I am of the number of those who feel the want of being surrounded and sustained, and God has not let me want for these supports. You single me out, and I am but a weak Christian. You deserve to know better ones, and so you will some day. You will see that this Church, which was never without her troubles, which the Pagans of St. Augustine's day fancied had come to an end, just as did the Albigenses of the thirteenth century and the Protestants of the sixteenth, has always had her lights, her virtues, and, above all—may you experience it!—her consolations, which alone are equal to the trials of life and the pangs of a suffering age."

It was in these consolations chiefly that Ozanam found strength to endure and combat one of those trials which was severely felt by the Catholics of this particular age, namely, the warfare of miserable bickerings and violent reprisals carried on by a certain portion of the Catholic press.

In the autumn of the year 1849, about a year after the death of the *Ère Nouvelle*, a new paper, intended to replace that journal, was started, and Ozanam was invited to become a regular contributor. His health, however, made it impossible for him to comply, even if he had been tempted to throw in his lot once more with the journalists. "The Faculty of Medicine have decided that politics form no part of my *régime* for the present," he replies to a friend who wanted to draw out his opinion on some political question; and he obediently restricts himself to the laborious duties of his professorship.

"Don't believe those who tell you I am going to re-enter the lists of journalism," he says to M. Dufieux; "I am too thankful that the present moment presents no urgent reason for compelling me to quit my barbarians and my Fathers of the Church. The truth is that the Archbishop lends his patronage to a new paper, called the *Moniteur Religieux*, which the Abbé Gerbet is to edit, and to which I shall probably contribute an article now and then. I am sorry not to be able to do more for an enterprise which will be so useful if it only serves to relieve us from the responsibility which the *Univers* and the *Ami de la Religion* cast upon us. My dear friend, with the exception of the Archbishop and a handful of men around him, you only meet people who dream of the alliance of the throne and the altar; nobody seems to remember the fearful state of irreligion to which this doctrine led us, and there is not a Voltairian encumbered with an income of a few hundreds who is not wild to send everybody to mass, on condition that he does not go himself. Still I see the slackening of that blessed impulse of return and conversion which made the joy of my youth and the hope of my manhood, and I ask myself if, when our hair has grown grey, we shall still be able to kneel before the altar without hearing on every side those hisses which, twenty years ago, pursued the Christian to the door of the church. Let us watch and pray."

It was natural enough that a democrat, so ardent in his convictions, should feel some alarm on beholding the country lapsing into the same road which had led the men of the Restoration to ruin. "If you knew their illusions, if you could hear them talk!" he cries in despair. "And, mind, I don't speak of the elders, who, on the contrary, are the most experienced and the most tractable; I mean the young men, statesmen of from five-and-twenty to thirty, who, in

the fire of their enthusiasm, tolerate no compromise with the spirit of the age, who won't hear of such things as a constitution, a national representation, a press! The worst of it is, that religion is compromised by these madmen, who pique themselves on defending it from the Tribune, and who fill the green-room of the opera with the noise of their adventures.

"The *Univers* is working hard at making the Church unpopular, picking holes in everything that is most popular about her, attacking the Père Lacordaire, for instance, in order to rehabilitate the Inquisition. Confess that the moment is well chosen! There are two schools that have striven to serve God by the pen. One sets up, as its head, M. de Maistre, whom it exaggerates and garbles. It presents truth to mankind, not by its attractive, but its most repulsive side. It aims, not at conciliating the unbelieving, but at stirring up the passions of believers. The other school was that of Châteaubriand and Ballanche, and is still that of the Père Lacordaire and the Abbé Gerbet. Its aim is to search out all the secret fibres of the human heart that can attach it to Christianity, awakening in it the love of the true, the good, and the beautiful, and then showing it in revealed faith, the ideal of those three things to which every soul aspires. Its mission is to bring back those who have gone astray, and to increase the number of Christians.

"I confess that I prefer to belong to this latter school, and I never will forget that saying of St. Francis de Sales, 'that we catch more flies with a spoonful of honey than with a barrel of vinegar.'"

Unfortunately, the sweet wisdom of the saying was not adopted by the school which Ozanam repudiates, and whose leaders fully vindicated his judgment by their unwarrantable aggressiveness. He was himself the least aggressive

of men; he was never given to sitting in judgment on others, and there is no instance on record of his ever having taken the initiative in an attack. But this doctrine of reserve and gentleness, which he practised as faithfully as he taught it, made him suspected in the eyes of those who considered it their duty to hold the lash perpetually uplifted. A man who was so slow to foredoom any one, however wicked, to eternal punishment, was likely to hold loose opinions on the dogma, and, accordingly, on the strength of this assumption, he was denounced as a deserter, a Catholic who had ceased to believe in hell.

Ozanam was philosophically scornful of such attacks in general, but he was stung to the quick by this one. It was not, however, until he found that the calumny was gaining ground, and called for a direct denial, that he condescended to clear himself. He did this in a letter to a friend, who had momentarily wronged him by believing the charge. ". . . I wished," he says, "to devote my life to the service of the faith. It seemed to me that my days would have been well spent if, in spite of my own insufficiency, I succeeded in gathering and keeping round my chair a number of young spirits, in reinstating the principles of Christian science, and forcing my audience to respect what they had hitherto despised,—the Church, the Papacy, and the Monastic life. I should like to have collected these same thoughts into books more durable than my lectures, and all my desires would have been accomplished if a few wandering souls found there a reason for abjuring their prejudices and coming back, with God's help, to the truth of Catholicism.

"This is what I have been striving for these ten years, without any ambition for a higher destiny, but also without having ever had the misfortune to desert the field. And yet you, who know me so well—you who have re-

ceived the overflowing of my soul from its very depth—you who have followed my career step by step, after opening the doors of it to me,—you are ready, at the bidding of a newspaper, to doubt my faith! A layman without authority, without any sort of mission, who does not even sign his name, accuses me of having, through cowardice, through self-interest, betrayed the common cause, and taunts me with what he calls my *denials*, whereupon you take the alarm, and begin to fear that I don't believe in hell! You put me in the painful necessity of having to bear testimony to myself. Well, St. Paul, when he was unjustly accused, had to bear witness to himself. Dear friend, should I be, as I now am, in my thirty-seventh year, worn out prematurely with cruel infirmities, if I had not been actuated by the desire, by the hope, by the delusion if you will, of serving Christianity? Was there really no peril in bringing forward the religious question, in reinstating, one by one, the institutions of Catholicism, when, a mere assistant professor, I had to consider the philosophical opinions of those who held my future at their disposal—when alone I stood by M. Lenormant, assisted at his *cours*, and supported him by my presence and my voice, when later, in 1848, the Revolution passed daily under the very windows of the Sorbonne? If I have had some success as a professor and a lecturer, it is to courage, to work, and not to base concessions that I owe it. It is true I am nothing but a poor sinner before God, but He has not yet let me cease to believe in eternal punishment. It is false that I have ceased to believe in it; that I have denied, dissembled, or attenuated that or any other article of faith. And permit me to add, that if my friends at Lyons had seen the last work I published, *La Civilisation Chrétienne chez les Francs*, they would perceive that I there attacked the most important historians of the present time on every point where they

stand opposed to Catholic truth, to the honour of the Church and the Papacy.

"It is equally false that I took the initiative in this controversy, and gave the bad example of polemics amongst Christians. I should not have said one word if the *Univers* had not challenged me in its disastrous discussion about the Inquisition. I abhorred its opinions; I knew the mischief it was doing; and how strongly the Archbishop disapproved of it. It summoned me by name to declare whether or not I agreed with it. I seized the first opportunity to assert that I did not, but without picking a quarrel, without even naming the *Univers*, much less any of its writers; without doing the least thing to give them a right to be abusive or personal. I am so far from sharing this fighting propensity, that I thought it more Christian-like not to answer at all. I had a right to remain silent if I chose, and many advised me to do so. For the sake of peace, however, I decided otherwise, though I was amply compensated by the great number of estimable persons who loudly expressed their indignation at the attack. I felt that it behoved me, nevertheless, to justify myself to you first, because of your friendship, and, in the next place, for the sake of those amongst our friends who may have shared your alarm, and to whom I beg you will communicate this letter."

CHAPTER XXIII.

1850.

In the autumn of 1850 Ozanam made a tour in Brittany with his wife and child. His health was again a cause of serious alarm, and he was forbidden to touch a pen during the holidays. But no prohibition could reduce him to complete idleness. He declared, and with truth, as regarded the severe finish he exacted in his work, that writing was laborious to him as a birth, yet in another sense it was as easy and spontaneous as thought; he could never come upon a place or an event of striking interest without being irresistibly moved to write off an account of it to some absent friend. Thanks to this habit of photographing his impressions, a full and graphic narrative of his various journeys has been preserved to us. So it was on this Breton tour; every incident of the road is related in a series of spirited letters to his brothers. When his brother Charles scolded him for this disobedience to the Faculty, Frederic disarms him by the touching argument, "I cannot see a beautiful landscape without longing to pass on my enjoyment to those I love." And again he urges as his excuse, "I feel a pang when I lie down at night and think that I have done nothing all day; a scrap of letter looks like something, and keeps up the delusion that I am still capable of stringing a few words together."

The manners and customs of Brittany, which have proved such a rich storehouse to poets and legend-mongers, have seldom been more faithfully and delicately depicted than by Ozanam in these rapid way-side notes. The memory of Italy guards him, however, from undue enthusiasm, and compels him to look at Brittany with an eye which grander and lovelier scenes have rendered critical. He is far, nevertheless, from spurning the beauties of the fair Bretagne; he admires the stern shore of St. Gildas, the glorious bay of Douarnenez, the fresh valleys of Finistère, and the gay gardens that flower along the banks of the stream of Quimper. But his warmest sympathies are for the Bretons themselves. "Italy has fine landscapes, but its peoples are less strongly marked; one must go to Greece to find such picturesque costumes, and make the tour of the world to find a faith so firm, men so brave, and women so pure. . . . We have been very fortunate in our sight-seeing. We have fallen in with village fêtes (*pardons*), wrestling-matches, weddings, and, to crown our good luck, last Friday, in crossing the little village of Ploneven, we fell in with a numerous company coming out from a funeral. Thirty or forty splendid men, all dressed alike in blue doublet and white trousers, with long hair falling; they passed from the church to the tavern close by, to commemorate worthily the virtues of the deceased."

The *pardon* of St. Anne d'Auray, the national shrine of Brittany, which is frequented by thousands of pilgrims annually on the 28th of July, was one of the most delightful incidents of his tour :—

"The procession, that is, the finest part of the fête, came after vespers. Picture to yourself a green plain, sloping down to the sea, just then glittering with the parting beams of sunset. It was here the *cortége* formed itself, opened as usual by little maidens dressed in white,

with our five children[1] bringing up the rear, and forming as pretty a group as you can fancy; after this came the boys, the women, the sailors, preceded by a large flag of the republic, and bearing on their shoulders a little ship with a Madonna on the quarter-deck; then came the priests, the statue of our Lady on a litter, the mayor, with a numerous group of men, and the crowd following on behind, or dispersing so as to get a view of the procession as it wound through the striking landscape. The most touching thing of all was a young man of three-and-twenty, destined to the priesthood, but struck with a disease from which he will never recover. He had dragged himself to the threshold of his door, and stood there, all in black, happy to contemplate for the last time the procession of his native place. The banners fluttered gaily, to the pride of those bearers who were strong enough to make head against the wind. The statue of our Lady shone out from afar in the blaze of the setting sun, which delineated brightly the rigging of the votive ship. Above it all soared the chanting of the litanies, and the faith of a people to whom doubt is unknown, and the prayer of the young deacon who was offering up the sacrifice of his life: how could God not be touched by the spectacle? How could those who beheld it remain unmoved?

"When the hour for returning came, we saw the little barks rowing out from every side bearing away the good folks who had come from the neighbouring shores to assist at the fête. We did the same; and I shall not try to describe to you the serenity of that evening hour, the beauty of that sheet of water, blue as the lake of Geneva, the flocks of sea-gulls that seemed to rise up from the crest of the waves to fly before us. We, meanwhile, were seated at the foot of

[1] His little Marie and the four children of his host, M. de Francheville.

our mast, sheltered by our picturesque sail, with our little ones playing safely between our knees; and thus softly we were borne to the beach of the castle. . . ."

He culls a legend here and there, and sends it, like a flower, in his letters home. "In the fourteenth century there dwelt in these woods a poor idiot, who went on his way morning and evening, singing the *Ave Maria* and begging his bread. He died, and was buried like a dog, outside the cemetery; but after a few weeks there blossomed forth on his grave a beautiful lily, whose leaves bore, in letters of gold, *Ave Maria.* The news went quickly round, and stirred the inhabitants; pilgrims and offerings poured in, and soon there arose, like another flower, on the tomb of the poor idiot that pretty church of Notre Dame du Fol-Goat, laden with the most exquisite chiselling of Gothic art."

The interests of the poor held their place in Ozanam's thoughts here as ever, and he relates, with grateful delight, how at Morlaix he and Madame Ozanam were affectionately entertained for three days by a family to whom they were complete strangers, their only link being the brotherhood of St. Vincent de Paul. "I visited here a conference just established, but already working actively," he informs his brother; "then they insisted on my holding forth at the Congress, where the *savans* of Brittany had assembled to discuss the improvement of the equine race and druidical stones; to sink the question of the bards, and of manure. So you see it is no use my flying from work to the depths of the provinces; it seizes me on the way; and I had at Morlaix not a little Sorbonne, but a downright Collége de France, with the fairer half of mankind amongst my audience. I did not pay, however, for this disobedience to my Hippocrates, and I was brisk enough to set out on Saturday in the most remarkable vehicle that we have yet seen.

A passer-by exclaimed, on beholding our venerable equipage,—' The inventor of that chariot ought to have taken out a patent !' "

He bears testimony to the patriarchal hospitality which greeted him everywhere in the old manors and keeps of Brittany, where he witnessed " domestic virtues and traditions of honour, too rare in France now-a-days, unfortunately." But he is less satisfied with the state of political feeling amongst his hosts. " I have come across the strangest opinions, Legitimist passions excited by the accounts from Wiesbaden, and the programme of M. de Barthélémy everywhere received with transports of joy by people who desire absolute royalty. And yet outside the castles I see few signs to confirm these hopes. The peasantry would fight again for their altars; they would not give a drop of their blood to the parties that are fighting for power. In the bottom of their hearts they incline towards royalty, but with a singular indifference, and a perfect disposition to let any government have its way so long as it does not close their churches. I have seen in Morbihan, the classic land of *Chouannerie*,[1] the Republican flag carried before the statue of the blessed Virgin, and the villagers decked in tricolor ribbons at their weddings, while the gentlemen wore green and white ones. I saw them dancing in rounds to the tune of a song whose burden was *Vive Napoléon !* and I heard *grandes dames* bewail the apathy of those louts who actually have the bad taste not to go and get themselves shot in order to restore to these ladies their *tabourets* at Court. M. de Carné, whom I met at Quimper, assures me that the clergy in these parts tend towards democracy."

We should form a very incorrect idea of Ozanam if we represented him as always absorbed in wise thoughts or philosophical observations. " No one enjoyed *les bonnes*

[1] Sobriquet given during the Revolution to the cause of the royalists of La Vendée.

bêtises more than he did," says a friend who knew him all his life. He never grew too wise for so "great a happiness in life as laughter," but retained to the last that frank, almost boyish gaiety, which rendered his society so attractive to the young. Even when physical suffering and languor checked the sparkling flow of his animal spirits, it only required the lightest touch to set them in motion, and make him break out into some ebullition of fun or *espièglerie*.

"Few knew better how to clothe a rebuke in a witty *repartie*, as once, for instance, during this very tour in Brittany. He happened to be travelling in the diligence with a young soldier, who was annoying a modest-looking girl by his forward attentions; Ozanam said something about chivalry being the first duty of a soldier, upon which the aggressor bade him mind his own concerns, adding that it was no business of his to lecture people. 'You are mistaken, my friend; that is precisely my business,' retorted Ozanam: 'I am paid by the State for lecturing you.'"

This Breton journey would seem to have furnished innumerable opportunities for fun of one kind or another. The memory of one of them survives in the shape of a burlesque poem addressed to M. Ampère, who was to have joined the tourists, but played false to the rendezvous, and went off on a scientific mission instead. The verses are bright and clever in themselves, but they sounded inimitable when Ozanam suddenly burst out with them, as if to relieve the vehemence of his indignation while the party were driving through the lovely landscape round their host's the Vicomte de la Villemarqué's property. It still provokes the laughter of those who remember the force and manner of the improvisatore as he uttered the opening lines, furiously emphasising the last word:—

"Tandis qu'enfourchant l'hippogriffe,
Vous courez après l'hiéroglyphe,

Qu'un diable écrivit de sa griffe
Sur quelque obélisque apocryphe,
Notre amitié s'en ébouriffe,
Et demande que l'on vous biffe
Du livre des preux chevaliers."[1]

His fury, however, quickly subsided into a milder tone, and he informs the truant that "little Marie is in excellent health, growing like a little flower;" that she is beginning to read, and, if the absentee delays much longer, "she will write to him." The threat apparently did not terrify the traveller to the desired effect, for, in the February of the next year (1851), we hear Ozanam still sending forth appeals to him to come home and leave the Neapolitans to the enjoyment of their "cloudless sky, and their blue sea, and their volcano, so admirably placed with a view to the picturesque. . . . Don't allow yourself to be kept away by the accounts that reach you of our agitations and dangers," he says; "there are riots in the Assembly and excitement in the *salons*, but the streets are perfectly quiet. Affairs are quietly drifting into the road of prorogation. It is not heroic, but it is convenient; it is provisional; it enables one to postpone the evil day—*l'heure des coups de fusil*. Honest republicans see in it a means of accustoming the country to the name of republic, and of preserving at least a slender remnant of universal suffrage.

"The Orleanists think it gives the Comte de Paris time to attain his majority.

"I say nothing of the Bonapartists, who have the upper hand. There remain, therefore, only the Legitimists and the Socialists, two parties out of five, to oppose the prorogation, and I don't believe they are powerful enough. You see that I am not alarmed, and that I keep to your school, which is no small merit in the pupil when the master is no

[1] See p. 300, Letters, vol. ii.

longer there. Amongst the benefits you have conferred on me since I have had the joy of knowing you, I reckon that of having reassured me in 1848, when everybody was terrified, and having taught me never to despair."

And yet there were moments when the temptation to despair was strong, when Ozanam was obliged to gather up all the promises of faith and grasp them passionately, in order that hope might not fail him.

"See!" he exclaims to M. Tomaseo, "see how far the great lesson of 1848 is from having taught men anything. There they are, one after another, making it a point of honour to declare before heaven and earth that they were never mistaken, and that these momentous events have taught them nothing, and upbraided them with nothing. There they are at their old hatreds again, busy with their petty everyday passions, and fallen back into the old laziness that makes them fly from everything like a novelty, doing their utmost, in fact, to force Divine Providence to strike a second and a heavier blow. I have only one hope, but it is a grand one. It is, that in the midst of the political decomposition of society, Christianity is being more firmly rooted, and that the faith has never manifested itself more vigorously than during this year. The multitude, not knowing to whom to go, has turned to the only Master who has the words of eternal life. Ah! France is truly the Samaritan woman of the Gospel; she has gone many times to drink at fountains that could not quench her thirst; she will at last attach herself to Him who promises her the living water, so that she may never more thirst.

"I know not how Europe is to be reconstituted. It is evident that the dreams of parties have vanished, but what one cannot fail to recognise is, that the idea which civilised the barbarians is still moving the chaos of our own days. Opinions stand armed, and are on the eve of a struggle,

but there are Christians in every camp. God scatters us under hostile flags, so that there may not be in this society, all broken up into parties, a single faction where a few at least shall not invoke and bless God the Saviour!"

There never was a time, or at least there never had been then, when this division was more complete, when parties were more numerous, more violent and implacable. Ozanam looked out over the scene with the anxious, pondering gaze of a man too earnest in his patriotism to shake off his own share of responsibility in the general account. While God was teaching the nation this tremendous lesson, it behoved every man to listen and learn. "Let us learn, above all, to defend our convictions," he says, "but without hating our adversaries; let us learn to love those who think differently from us, to admit that there are Christians in every camp, and that God can be served to-day as ever. Let us complain less of the times, and more of ourselves; let us be less faint-hearted, let us be worthier."

He refrained as much as possible from discussing politics, because it was such misery to him to see the low level on which they were placed; to see them so misunderstood by those who, unlike him, believed it their mission to lead and direct them. "When I see," he says, "the monarchical parties, whose fusion was, by the way, to restore French society, let loose so cruelly, and the Orleanists themselves so divided that their recriminations have been filling the columns of twenty newspapers this fortnight past,—when I see all this I should like to believe in the duration of the Republic, above all, for the good of religion and the salvation of the Church of France, which would be so terribly compromised if events threw into power a party ready to recommence all the errors of the Restoration. . . . We have not faith enough; we are always looking for the re-establishment of religion by political means; we dream of

a Constantine, who, with one blow and one effort, would bring back the nations to the fold. The fact is, we don't really know the history of Constantine—how he became Christian precisely because half the world was already Christian—how the crowd of sceptics, scoffers, and courtiers who thronged after him into the Church only brought with them hypocrisy, scandal, and relaxation. No; it is not laws, but morals, that make conversions; consciences must be laid siege to one by one. Look at those two great examples, Paris and Geneva, two cities where, from 1830 to 1848, not a single law was enacted in favour of Catholicism, and where the conversion of souls has been accomplished with a strength and perseverance that have astonished every one. Look at the United States, look at England. Faith only flourishes where it finds a hostile or a foreign government. We must not ask God to send us bad governments, but we must not try to give ourselves a government that will relieve us of our duties by taking on itself a mission for the souls of our brothers which God has not confided to it. *Unicuique mandavit Deus de proximo suo.* Let us continue and extend personal proselytism, but let us abjure and abhor the sloth and cowardliness that would prompt us to call to our aid the proselytism of the State."

The nobler kind of proselytism was being carried on generously, and with fruitful results, in many quarters. Père Lacordaire was drawing the best intellect of Paris to his feet during the Lenten Conferences, which he had resumed at Notre Dame. Ozanam alludes to the closing one as "an event in the ecclesiastical history of our times." The subject was the number of the elect. To the Gallican opinion on this subject, Lacordaire opposed the more consoling doctrine of the older divines as to the probable salvation of the greater number, and, says Ozanam, "he protested warmly against those men of despair who see around them

nothing but evil and damnation. In language more eloquent than any I ever heard, even from him, he proclaimed the mercies of God in favour of those who work and suffer; that is to say, in favour of far the greater number.. And when he commented on the text, 'Blessed are the poor!' the charity that overflowed on his lips and beamed in his whole person threw him into one of those transports that one reads of in the lives of the saints. The thousands who thrilled to his voice under the vaulted roof of Notre Dame asked themselves whether they were listening to an angel or to a man."

This year was a peaceful and happy one to Ozanam, although his health was still a source of suffering and anxiety, and rendered his professional duties oftentimes a burden beyond his strength. "Providence is treating us this year with great tenderness, like weak Christians who require indulgence," he says; and later on he declares, that in spite of grave cares in the future, and much suffering in the present, he is "as happy as it is possible to be here below."

He had hired a country house at Sceaux, near Paris, where his friend Ampère came to spend some days in every week with him. The latter recalls these peaceful visits in a few touching lines. "It was during the summer of 1851, seated on a bench, which I can see now in his little garden at Sceaux, where he had gone to seek a little rest with his wife and child, that Ozanam, already worn out, read to me his description of *paganism*. They were the last serene days of our friendship, the last whose sweetness was not poisoned by the anxiety we were obliged to hide from him."

Perhaps the shadow of the parting was already upon them, though they knew it not, and made these days of intercourse seem doubly sweet. Ozanam relished them

with a fulness of enjoyment that he had seldom before experienced.

The two friends worked diligently all the morning, then in the afternoon followed endless walks and conversations, and in the evening M. Ampère would charm his hosts by some pages from the MS. of his historical novel *Hilda*, which had already had the triumph of Mme. Récamier's and Chateaubriand's applause at the soirées of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. The two *savans* presented as perfect a type of manly friendship as any we can recall; it had kept all the promises of early youth, and now, in its maturity, preserved the bloom and enthusiasm of its dawn; they had no secrets from one another; there was only one point in which their union was not perfect; but it was the essential one, and Ozanam could never refer to it without a pang. The fire of doubt, as he had called it, which had passed over his own soul, leaving it purified and strengthened, had wrought differently in the noble soul of Ampère; he had lost the faith he had inherited from his father, and which that illustrious man had practised with the docility of a little child all his life. But the son was ill at ease in his unbelief; his heart yearned after the lost treasure; nothing filled up the void, neither the adulation of society, nor fame, nor science, nor the prodigious resources of his rich fantastic imagination; his cup of life was seemingly full to overflowing; but it wanted the one thing which can satisfy the infinite capacity of the human soul—the knowledge of God, the certainty of an immortal destiny. It was not likely that Ozanam could come into close contact with this want and not do his utmost to supply it. A quotation from one of his letters to Ampère will suffice to show how faithfully and tenderly he strove to render this service to his friend; it was written immediately after the latter had parted from him to embark on a long and perilous voyage. "... How can you wonder

at my sadness in taking leave of you? . . . I could not tell you the cause of this sadness; I could not speak of it, because I did not wish to compel you to answer me, and if I write about it now it is because it is too late for you to reply. If what I am going to say is indiscreet, the waves that are bearing you to America will carry away the memory of it, new impressions will efface it, and when we meet six months hence you will have had time to forget what may have pained you in my letter.

"Dear friend, you are continually starting on long and fatiguing journeys that are not without danger to your health, already so severely tried. Bear, then, with my anxiety. You say you are seeking to create new sources of interest for yourself, and, with that great intellect that God has given you, you dive into every science, and now you are making the tour of half the world to find some novelty that may furnish a fresh interest. And yet there is a supreme interest, a good capable above all others of attaching and satisfying your noble heart; and I fear—forgive me, my friend, if I wrong you,—I fear that you do not think of it sufficiently. You are a Christian by birth, by the blood of your incomparable father; you fulfil all the duties of Christianity towards men; but are there not others to be fulfilled towards God? Must we not serve Him, and live in close intercourse with Him? Would you not find this intercourse a source of infinite consolation? Would you not find there security for eternity?

"You have more than once allowed me to surmise that these thoughts were not foreign to your heart. Your studies have brought you into communication with many great Christians; you have seen many eminent men around you end their lives in the Christian religion; these examples invite you, but you are arrested by the difficulties of the faith. Dear and excellent friend, I have never discussed

these difficulties with you, because you have infinitely more knowledge and intellect than I have. But let me tell you, nevertheless, there are but two things, Religion and Philosophy. Philosophy has lights; it has known God, but does not love Him; it has never called forth one of those tears of love that a Catholic sheds at the moment of Communion, and whose incomparable sweetness is worth, in itself alone, the sacrifice of an entire life. If I, who am so weak and bad, have experienced this sweetness, what would it not be with you, whose nature is so elevated and whose heart is so good! You would find there that internal evidence before which every doubt vanishes. Faith is an act of virtue, consequently an act of the will. We must, once for all, *will*, we must give our soul to God, and then He gives us the fulness of light.

"Ah! if some day you fell ill in a distant city of America, without a friend by your bedside, remember that there is not a town of any importance in the United States where the love of Jesus Christ has not guided a priest to console the Catholic traveller. . . ."

This appeal met with a frank response. Ampère promised that he would pray for this fulness of light, and seek it perseveringly. Fifteen years after the date of the above letter he wrote to one who had his confidence and Ozanam's: "I will persevere honestly in seeking for the truth; no one longs for it more sincerely than I do, and every night of my life I send up to God the prayer, *Give me light!*" The prayer was heard, but only when death came and drew aside the veil which had hung between the soul of Ampère and the light of eternal truth and mercy.

The famous Exhibition of the Crystal Palace was drawing all the nations of the earth to London in the summer of 1851, and Ozanam allowed himself to be persuaded by Ampère into falling in with the stream of visitors. He and

Madame Ozanam set off, with this indefatigable traveller for cicerone, in the first week of August. The wonders of the great commercial city, with its wealth and solid prosperity, were not much calculated to awaken the enthusiasm of the poet-mind which had been inspired by the legends of St. Francis and the wild beauties of his native hills. Ozanam was astounded and overpowered by London rather than charmed. He describes it as "the most imposing city in the world, when, through the mist which envelops and magnifies it, you first catch sight of the semicircle on the banks of the Thames, with its forest of steeples, columns, porticoes, and, towering above them all, the dome of St. Paul's. But when you come nearer and examine these monuments, all black and disproportioned, you find they are nothing but a failure, the failure of riches to procure what gold cannot buy, to transplant to an ungrateful soil the inspirations of Italy and France. In the midst of these wretched imitations there are, however, two striking exceptions, Westminster Abbey and the new Houses of Parliament. . . . As to the Exhibition, nothing can be finer than the order in which the infinite variety of human riches has been collected together in one edifice. *Savans* are delighted with the marvels already wrought by machinery, and those still greater that it promises; but if we except the Chinese and Indian departments, I am quite disenchanted by the monotonous uniformity in which material civilisation threatens to envelop the whole world. . . . This Exhibition includes nothing but articles of luxury, things which the wealthy classes alone want and pay for. The fictitious wants of this class are the same all over the world; a set of diamonds destined for the Queen of Spain is the exact twin of one that is to deck the Empress of Russia. God made the earth with an endless variety that was pleasant to the eyes; industry threatens to cover it with a uniformity

that will engender disgust and weariness. For my part, after beholding this epitome of human power at the end of nearly sixty centuries, I said to myself, 'What! can man do no more than this? The supreme effort of his genius is to cross silk with gold, to mix emerald leaves with diamond flowers!' And I went out and was glad to see the green sward of the Park, the groups of noble trees with the sheep grazing under their shade, and all those things that industry had not made."

The true exhibition, the one which, in his opinion, gave the most accurate impression of England's power and wealth, was not the industrial collection of the fairy edifice on the Serpentine, but the Docks, where her commerce keeps its treasury. "Above the bridges there is a city of luxury, a great capital, where foreigners throng in delight; but below the bridges, going down the Thames, there exists a second city of London, which is the life of the first. This one has no monuments but her vessels, whose masts, closer and more stately than all the colonnades above, carry the British flag to the most distant latitudes. This one has a tunnel where you walk under the river without hearing even the murmur of its waters. This one has docks, those huge basins where twenty-five thousand ships find shelter. All round rise countless warehouses. We wandered through them for hours, through streets composed entirely of boxes of tea, of sugar, of bales of Australian wool. Below, lamp in hand, we explored those gigantic cellars where the vintages of Spain and Portugal lie buried,—regular catacombs, but catacombs of Mammon, flanked not with tombs, but with barrels worth their weight in gold. This is the real exhibition, and one morning spent in these opulent gloomy regions struck and impressed us far more than the elegant galleries of the Crystal Palace."

There was something almost terrifying to Ozanam in this

tremendous accumulation of wealth. While admitting the necessity for its pursuit in legitimate trade, and the advantages accruing from the progress of industry, he could not divest himself of the feeling that, carried beyond a certain point, the result had in it "something dangerous, something of the tempter, something Satanic," and that it was impossible to display those dazzling treasures before the eyes of men, already too enamoured of the goods of this world, without detriment to their desires of a nobler gain. "I always seemed to see standing on the threshold of the Exhibition," he says, "the same demon who transported our Saviour to the top of the mountain, and to hear him saying again, 'All this will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' It looks to me like a seal of reprobation on these riches that they do not serve to ameliorate the lot of humanity, the lot, that is, of the greater number, and that the most opulent city in the world is also that which treats its poor most harshly."

The extent of that national and crying disgrace of England, Pauperism, presented indeed a painful contrast with this colossal wealth. Ozanam had seen poverty, *la misère*, both in Paris and at Lyons, but it was during a period of coma following upon revolution, and was explained, at least in its extreme state, by the convulsion which had brought labour of every description to a standstill. Here, however, there was no such fact to justify the horrible excess of pauperism which disfigured the rich metropolis. What vice was there in the system to account for it? "Why is London overrun with beggars, half-naked, who pursue the stranger, rushing under the very wheels of the carriages, and bearing on their countenances the traces of an inexorable despair? The poor-law and the workhouse cannot deal with the evil. The English cannot prevent mendicity from penetrating into London; they tolerate it, and

I give them credit for doing so. But why then do they insult so derisively the mendicity of Catholic countries? Never in the streets of Rome did I see anything approaching to those women in rags who hold out their hand to you along the Strand; to those little girls that one sees in a frock tattered up to their waist, with their naked feet in the cold black mud. And let it not be alleged that this is a display of misery got up to move the passers-by. Penetrate, I don't say even into the poor districts of Whitechapel or Southwark, but to the back of those sumptuous thoroughfares, Regent Street and Oxford Street, and you will find narrow little alleys, dark and foul, which lead into courts still narrower, hedged in with high houses. Here the beggars congregate; they are lodged by the week; a room costs, on an average, from three to four shillings a week—that is to say, from 200 to 250 francs a year. Many families are too poor to bear alone the burden of such a rent, so they unite to share and lighten it, and thus lose the satisfaction which the most wretched *ménages* enjoy with us, that of being all to themselves (*chez soi*). I saw one room and a narrow closet that was inhabited by fourteen persons. For some time past the police regulations have forbidden them to lodge in cellars; but distress, which is stronger than all other authorities, drives many workmen to seek this last refuge. . . ."

These wretched haunts had a stronger attraction for Ozanam than any other sight in London. "Better than I," says M. Ampère, "he would leave me to return alone to the Crystal Palace, that he might have more time to visit the cellars and garrets inhabited by the poor of Catholic Ireland; he would come away from them with his heart full, and always, I suspect, a little poorer than he went."

Few of the monuments of London found favour with Ozanam. St. Paul's he speaks of as an "icy edifice which

even Catholicism would have something to do to warm up," supposing M. de Maistre's prophecy were realised, and that the nineteenth century saw Mass celebrated there. "The true basilica of London, the St. Denis of the English monarchy, is Westminster," he says. "There, a stately nave rises up to rival our noblest naves of St. Ouen and Amiens. . . . The Christian architects who erected this church made it long and wide to contain the multitude of a faithful people, high and aerial, to waft the homage of earth nearer to God. Behind the choir and the high altar only, a partition contained a narrow space where the shrine of St. Edward was placed. A tomb of stone, adorned with mosaics, was the resting-place of the holy king's remains, the popular king who represented the historical souvenirs of the Anglo-Saxon nationality. The Norman princes never dreamed of disturbing the peace of this sanctuary; all their ambition was to rest near St. Edward. All round the shrine you see the sepulchres of Henry III., Edward III., Richard II., and behind these Henry VII. built a chapel which is the pearl of England. But Protestantism having banished God from this church, and being no longer able to fill it with a living people, imagined the device of encumbering it with the dead. . . . There is what is called the Poets' Corner and the Statesmen's Corner; but the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, in virtue of some arbitrary power, can, it seems, cede to those who were only rich the right to figure amongst the great. Hence the prodigious collection of mausoleums devoid of historical interest or monumental merit. . . . Not satisfied with decorating the walls, they have closed up entire arcades by piling up these monuments of vanity and bad taste."

Père Lacordaire, in his notice of Ozanam, relates a characteristic incident connected with his first visit to the Abbey. "He went in with the crowd of strangers and foreigners,

and found himself presently behind the choir, in front of the tomb of St. Edward. The sight of this monument, mutilated by Protestantism, filled him with anguish, and falling on his knees before the relics, such as they are, of the St. Louis of England, he prayed there alone in expiation for that people that no longer knows its saints, to the great contempt doubtless of the lookers-on, who took him for an idolater, if not for a madman." We are not surprised to learn that the indignant beadle hunted him out of the church. Ozanam beheld with gratitude and hope the progress of the faith in the midst of this people where it had once been so flourishing. "Every day numbers new conversions," he says; "and the example of those two grand souls, Newman and Manning, continues to move the hearts of the most religious of the Anglican clergy. Nothing is more touching than to see that fine church, St. George's Cathedral, just now threatened, but so full of hope, a glorious witness to the increase of Catholics, grown too numerous to be contained in the obscure chapels to which persecution had so long consigned them. Nothing can exceed the recollection and fervour of the faithful there at the divine offices; the communions are very numerous; that most eloquent prelate, Cardinal Wiseman, here addresses English Catholics in the long-forgotten language of St. Anselm and St. Thomas of Canterbury, while round him are gathered a group of zealous priests and laymen, who reminded me of your church at Geneva,[1] less considerable but not less flourishing. Both prove in an admirable manner that Catholicism has no need of the secular arm to achieve the conquest of consciences. And this reminds me, my dear friend, just now, that it is so all-important to the oppressed churches of England, Switzerland, Germany, and Poland, to vindicate the principle of civil liberty. I entreat you to prevent your

[1] Letter to M. Dufresne, ii. p. 378.

excellent journal from constituting itself the ally of those who combat this principle in France and Italy. We have to choose between liberty for our opponents and chains for our brothers."

Though Ozanam was in antagonism with English institutions in their religious bearing he found much to admire in the national character and customs. "There is no denying the fine qualities of the people," he says; "they are full of respect for the law and of love of their country; they are indefatigable in their industry, and they are religious too, if we may judge from the immense number of church-steeples that soar above London, and still more from the rest on Sunday, which is so strictly observed from one end of the country to the other by the most work-loving people in the universe."

He is surprised and pained by the spirit of pride that separates the classes, but rather amused by certain manifestations of it. "I visited some poor districts in company with a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul," he remarks, "and I was able to see what an amount of virtue and courage an Englishman requires in order to come personally to the assistance of this fearful misery; not that they are grudging of their money, but in this aristocratic land the contact of indigence defiles and compromises. Why, a shopman does not give you your change without folding it in a bit of paper! How then could a gentleman bring himself to press the hand of an Irish beggar? Our *confrères* of St. Vincent de Paul have, nevertheless, been enabled to overcome the prejudices of their birth; they do a great deal of good, and it was a joy to me to pass an evening in the midst of them."

Ozanam was not sorry to escape for a day from the "sadness of the great city of fogs and smoke, with its ill-lighted monuments," to the serener atmosphere of Oxford.

There all seemed to him "steeped in peace;" and he was enchanted with the old city of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, "with its noble colleges of Gothic architecture or in the style of the *Renaissance*. One wanders through their vast cloisters, their fine gardens, where there is nothing to remind you of the difference of centuries. The colleges of Christ's Church and St. Magdalen charmed us above all, and we were seriously tempted to take up our abode there,—for though celibacy is the rule in these communities there is an exception in favour of the canons of Christ's Church. I was much interested also in the Bodleian library. Mind and tell Daremberg that his friend Mr. Coxe gave us a most gracious welcome. He showed us the celebrated Arundel marbles, and took us over the University; he charmed us by that mixture of science, urbanity, and *naïveté* which renders him the worthy inhabitant of this venerable place."

The journey to England did not, on the whole, produce any decided improvement in the traveller's health. It rested and amused him, but he returned to his little country house at Sceaux no better, radically, than when he had left it. At the end of October he writes to M. Ampère, still absent in America, "I work a little, but with difficulty; I cover a page while you are flying over fifty leagues. I find, nevertheless, a certain benefit in the mere repose of the country, in this sojourn at Sceaux, where the leaves are departing, but whence peace departs not. From the window where I write I hear the merry voice of my little Marie, playing in the garden; and Amélie, seated close by, rejoices me by her look of health. . . ." The belief that his own health was vitally impaired was now close upon him, but he met it with courage and resignation; his only regret, as far as he considered himself personally, was that he had achieved so little, and was likely to be called away at the

moment when the labours of his life might have been rendered useful in some worthier and more permanent form. But even in his most intimate correspondence he avoided dwelling on this subject; he would say just enough to satisfy the claims of friendly anxiety, and then turn to more cheerful topics. This did not cost him any extraordinary effort; he retained to the last the charming faculty of being interested in everything, great and small, that came within his observation. M. Ampère's tour in the United States was just now a source of the liveliest interest to him, although he had been so averse to his friend's embarking on the expedition. "When I so strenuously opposed your Transatlantic voyage," he says, "I was only actuated by the egotism of friendship; don't fancy that I am an enemy to the Yankees, and don't, I implore of you, get me into any sort of trouble with that great people. They will probably realise the political ideal to which, in my opinion, modern society is tending. All that you tell me of Quebec and Montreal touches me deeply; above all, the joy you had in finding the name of your illustrious father still living there. I am delighted to see you seated at the family banquet of our brothers beyond the ocean. But don't suppose me indifferent to the good luck you had in coming in time for the festivities of Boston. I am far from making small account of the speeches of the President of the United States, and very far from despising those processions of working men of which the calm and well-disciplined democracy of America gives us the spectacle. They are better than our armed bands of Cher and Nièvre. Keep your eyes wide open, observe everything, and you will come back very opportunely in 1852; for, to speak out quite plainly, 1852 has begun this last fortnight, and affairs begin to be nicely complicated. Even if you wait till the month of April, I don't guarantee that you will find your

fauteuil at the Academy; it may have gone to boil the soup of the insurgents! Happy mortal! you will not see the smoke of our conflagrations; you will be yonder, on those peaceful shores, ready to receive your fugitive friends; you will patronise Madame Ozanam, and help her to set up a flower-stall in Broadway. As to me, my stock of English would not enable me to exercise my small talents of barrister and professor, so I see no career open to me but to beat the big drum behind my brother's carriage when he goes driving about to pull out teeth. And this is to be the finale of the Ozanam family, that had seemed to promise such great things! . . .

"Adieu, my friend; may the winds fill your sails in the right direction; let them blow you whither they will, they will never carry you to a corner of the earth where our thoughts do not follow you. Even our little Marie is *au courant* of your peregrinations; you are teaching her geography, and she now knows about America as the country where M. Ampère is travelling."

CHAPTER XXIV.

1852.

BEFORE the advent of the month of April, which was to see Ampère's academical arm-chair kindling the pot-fires of the Revolution, Ozanam was once more dangerously ill. He had carried on his *cours* through the winter without interruption, and with the usual success, but towards Easter his strength broke down. He was seized with a pleurisy which placed his life in immediate danger. During the course of this illness, and while he was a prey to a burning fever, he found strength, nevertheless, inspired by his ardent faith, which might truly now be called the ruling passion strong in death, to write the following letter to a friend whose faith had been shipwrecked in the study of profane science. The ostensible pretext for the letter was the misfortune of an old schoolfellow of theirs who had been recently struck with blindness. Ozanam informs M. H. that their poor friend has no alternative but to get admittance to the Hospital of Incurables, and that he accepts his fate with the most heroic resignation. "You have been kind and generous to our old comrade," adds the writer, "and he is grateful, and will pray for you. And I, too, unworthy as I am, I will pray for you, since you wish it. Oh! what touching memories that word brings back to me! The sweetness of that Christmas night, those conversations with you and Lallier, when, young and in love with nothing but truth, we conversed together on

eternal things. Let me speak out, my friend. . . . Who knows? Perhaps the moment is come to do so. You have sought, in the sincerity of your heart, to solve your difficulties, and you have not succeeded; but, my dear friend, the difficulties of religion are like those of science,—there are always some that remain. It is a great thing to settle a few of them; no single life would suffice to exhaust them all. To decide all the questions that may arise about the Scriptures, one should know thoroughly all the Oriental languages. To answer all the objections of Protestants, one would require to study the history of the Church in its minutest details, or rather the universal history of modern times. You never could, therefore, occupied as you are in other ways, answer all the doubts that your active and ingenious imagination is for ever evoking for the greater torment of your heart and mind. Fortunately God has not put certainty at such a price. What then are we to do? We are to do in religion as we do in science,—satisfy ourselves of the proofs of a given number of truths, and then abandon the rest to the investigation of the learned. I believe firmly that the earth goes round. I know, nevertheless, that this doctrine has its difficulties, but astronomers explain them, and, if they don't explain them all, the future will do the rest. So it is with the Bible; it is beset with difficult questions. Some have been solved long ago, others, hitherto considered insoluble, have been answered in our own day; there remain still many to be solved, but God permits this to keep the human mind on the alert, and to exercise the activity of future ages.

"No! God cannot exact that religious truth, that is to say the essential food of every soul, should be the fruit of a long research, impossible to the great number of the ignorant, and difficult to the most learned. Truth must

be within reach of the lowliest, and religion must rest upon evidence accessible to the most insignificant.

"For my own part, after experiencing many doubts, after having drenched my pillow many and many a night with tears of despair, I rested my faith upon an argument which any mason or coal-heaver may take hold of. I said to myself, that since every people have a religion, good or bad, it is clear that religion is a universal, perpetual, and, consequently, legitimate want of humanity. God, who created this want, has consequently pledged Himself to satisfy it; there must, therefore, be a true religion. Now, amongst the multitude of creeds that divide the world, without going into the study or discussion of facts, who can doubt but that Christianity is supremely preferable, and the only one that leads man to his moral destiny? But again, in Christianity there are three Churches—the Protestant, the Greek, and the Catholic—that is to say, anarchy, despotism, and order. The choice is not difficult, and the truth of Catholicism requires no other demonstration.

"This, my dear friend, is the brief chain of reasoning which opened to me the doors of the faith. But once entered in, I was suddenly illuminated with a new flood of light, and much more deeply convinced of the internal evidences of Christianity. By this I mean the daily experience which enables me to find in the faith of my childhood all the strength and light of my mature manhood, the sanctification of my domestic joys, the solace of all my troubles. If the whole earth were to abjure Christ, there is in the unutterable sweetness of one communion, in the sweet tears that it gives rise to, a force of conviction that would suffice to make me cling to the Cross and defy the unbelief of the whole world. But I am far from such a trial, and, on the contrary, how powerful amongst men is

the action of this faith in Christ, which is represented as dead! You do not know, perhaps, to what an extent the Saviour of the world is still loved, the virtues that He still evokes, the self-sacrifices, equal to the early ages of the Church, that He still inspires! I need only point to the young priests that I see starting from the Seminary of Foreign Missions to go and die at Tonquin, as St. Cyprian and St. Irene did; to those converted Anglican ministers who give up splendid incomes to come to Paris to try and get bread for their wives and children by giving lessons. No! Catholicism is not bereft of heroism in the days of Monseigneur Affre, nor of eloquence in the days of Lacordaire, nor of any kind of glory or authority in an age which has seen Napoleon, Royer Collard, and Chateaubriand die Christians!

"Independently of this internal evidence, I have been for the last ten years studying the history of Christianity, and every step I take in this direction strengthens my convictions. I read the Fathers, and I am filled with delight by the moral beauties they unfold to me, the philosophical lights with which they dazzle me. I plunge into the barbarous ages, and I see the wisdom of the Church, and her magnanimity. I do not deny the disorders of the Middle Ages, but I have convinced myself that Catholic truth struggled single-handed against the evil, and evolved out of this chaos those prodigies of virtue and genius which we admire. I am passionately enamoured of the legitimate conquests of the modern mind; I love liberty, and I have served it, and I believe that it is to the Gospel that we owe liberty, equality, and fraternity. I have had leisure and opportunity to study all these problems, and so they were made clear to me. But I did not want this, and if other duties had hindered me from those historical researches in which I found such intense

interest, I should have reasoned about them as I do about exegetical studies, whose access is closed to me. I believe in the truth of Christianity, consequently, if there be any objections, I believe that sooner or later they will be explained; I believe even that some may never be explained, because Christianity treats of the relations of the finite with the infinite, and that we shall never understand the infinite. All that my reason has right to exact is, that I should not compel it to believe in the absurd. Now, there can be no philosophical absurdity in a religion which satisfied the intelligence of Descartes and Bossuet, nor any moral absurdity in a creed which sanctified St. Vincent de Paul, nor any philological absurdity in an interpretation of Scriptures which satisfied the vigorous mind of Sylvestre de Sacy. Certain men of modern times cannot bear the dogma of eternal punishment; they consider it inhuman. Do they fancy they love humanity more, and that they have a finer perception of the just and the unjust than St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Francis of Sales? It is not because they love humanity more; it is because they have a less lively sense of the horror of sin and the justice of God. Oh! my dear friend, let us not waste our time in endless discussions. We have not two lives, one to search out the truth, and the other to practise it. This is why God does not need to be searched after. He reveals Himself in this living Christian society which surrounds you; He is before your eyes; He urges you. . . . You will soon be forty years of age; it is time you decided. Yield to the Saviour who is entreating you; give yourself up to Him as your friends have done; you will then find peace. Your doubts will vanish as mine vanished. You want so little to be an excellent Christian! you want nothing but one act of the will; to believe is to will. *Will* once for all, *will* at the feet of a priest, who

will call down the sanction of Heaven on your trembling act. Have but this courage, my friend, and the faith that you so admire in poor L., and which supports him under so great a misfortune, will add its untold sweetness to your prosperity."

The courage which enabled Ozanam to write this long appeal from his sick-bed was soon after rewarded; before he died he had the happiness of knowing that his friend had returned to the faith.

The most grievous trial of illness to Ozanam was the inactivity which it enforced. He had continued to lecture regularly at the Sorbonne long after he should have ceased in sheer mercy to himself; but to the medical men and friends who entreated him to give it up, he would reply, "I must do my day's work:" "*Il faut faire ma journée.*" He continued to do it as long as he could gather up a remnant of strength to drag himself to his chair. But the day was spent now, and the faithful labourer was soon to receive his reward.

He was still confined to his bed, suffering great pain, and consumed with fever, when one day he heard that the public were clamouring for him at the Sorbonne, accusing him of self-indulgence and neglect of duty in being so long absent from his *cours*, when he was paid by the State for giving it. The news stung him to the quick. "I will show them it is not true. I will do honour to my profession!" he cried. And, in spite of the tears of his wife and the entreaties of his brother and another medical attendant, he had himself dressed and drove straight to the Sorbonne, where he found the crowd still collected outside his class. When the Professor, leaning on the arm of a friend, pale, worn, more like a spectre than a living man, advanced through their midst, the rioters were smitten with horror and remorse; as he ascended the chair that had witnessed so many of his triumphs, and that he was never to ascend again, their

applause broke forth, rising and falling like waves around him. He stood for some minutes gazing in silence on the thoughtless, cruel young crowd, his black dazzling eyes shining with the terrible light of fever, his long hair hanging, his whole appearance that of a man who was nearer to death than to life. When at last the tumult subsided, he spoke. His voice rang out as clear as silver, more piercing from its very weakness, like a spirit imprisoned in a body too frail to bear the shock of its inspiration. "Gentlemen," he said, "our age is accused of being an age of egotism; we Professors, it is said, are tainted with the general epidemic; and yet it is here that we use up our health; it is here that we wear ourselves out. I do not complain of it; our life belongs to you; we owe it to you to our last breath, and you shall have it. For my part, if I die it will be in your service!"

He said truly; this last effort killed him. He gave the lecture, speaking with an eloquence and power that startled those who had heard him in his palmiest days. The enthusiasm of the audience rose at last to frenzy. Perhaps they felt instinctively that human speech could go no higher, and that having now reached its apogee in Ozanam, they would never hear his voice again. As he left the lecture-hall friends gathered round him in delighted congratulation, and one pressing his hand, exclaimed, "You were wonderful to-day!"

"Yes," replied Ozanam, with a smile, "but now the question is, how to get some sleep to-night." And he got none.

The next day his brother came, and, sitting by the sick man's bed, discovered, to his horror, that there was a principle of decomposition in the blood. "He may be dead in ten days!" he said in a whisper to his eldest brother.

As soon as it was possible for him to be moved he was

taken to Eaux-Bonnes, in hopes that the waters might arrest, at least for a time, the fatal progress of the disease. But the hope was vain. He gained sufficient strength, however, to enjoy the wild beauties of the scenery, to walk out every day, and even "to climb up the rocks after the goats by way of digesting these tumblersful of sulphurous water which I am condemned to swallow between two mountains," he says to M. de la Villemarqué; and adds, "I have all my clan with me, and when we shall have decamped from these altitudes, we go on to Biarritz for sea-bathing; and after that I am condemned to exile in the south for the winter."

He derived so much benefit from the waters after a short time, that it at once struck him what a boon it would be to the poor, attacked with his own malady, if they could come to Eaux-Bonnes; and he forthwith set to work on a scheme of building or hiring a hospital, and creating a fund, through the generosity and exertions of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which should serve to defray the travelling expenses of the invalids. He was not spared to carry out the plan, but we understand that it has been revived of late, and is likely to be realised. Meantime Ozanam took advantage of his sojourn at Eaux-Bonnes to found a Conference. Another consolation was granted him in the society of that beautiful kindred soul, the Abbé Perreyve, who, like him whom he called his "Master," was stricken by the hand of death, and had come to seek relief in the salutary waters. Père Lacordaire has quoted the pages, full of pathetic beauty, where the young priest recalls these days of sweet and tender intercourse, when the two friends wandered over the hills together, sometimes in silent soul-communion, listening to the song of birds and the music of falling waters—sometimes conversing on things human and Divine,—on God, on Nature, on the life

beyond, to which they were approaching. "When the sky was clear," says the Abbé Perreyve, "we would start early, making our way to one of those pleasant walks round Eaux-Bonnes, and the remembrance of which is beautified to me now by that of his dear presence. We often chose the Horizontal Promenade. There we enjoyed the evening calm, and we came away when the sun, forsaking the purple heights of the Pic du Gers, sent the fresh vapours of the valley of Laruns floating up to us. When at the end of our walk we caught sight of the house-tops of Eaux-Bonnes it was nightfall; the hills stood out in sharp and sombre lines against the still luminous sky; the moon, emerging from the firs of the highest rocks, rose silently, and breathings, regular as the slumbers of a child, lulled the woods softly. At this hour, in this lovely spot, our souls ascended naturally to God. We still conversed, but long intervals of silence seemed to warn us that it was the hour rather for prayer—that deep unspoken prayer that words cannot articulate, and which consists only in being silent before God. O my Lord! O my Master! I thank Thee for having granted me those hours."

Ozanam too gave thanks for them. Indeed, it may be said with truth, that few men were ever more diligent in thanksgiving than he was. "God evidently saw fit to give me a few days longer, in order that I might become better: may He be blessed for it!" he exclaims; "but is it His purpose to restore my health, or to make me expiate my sins by long sufferings? I know nothing, except that I bless Him! May He only grant me courage; let Him send me the suffering that purifies; and if I must carry a cross, may it be that of the penitent thief!" Yet he was far from being without hope of his recovery, although his chief aim was to attain perfect resignation to renounce it. He left Eaux-Bonnes in September, and writes from

Biarritz soon after his arrival there : "It would be great ingratitude towards Divine Providence not to hope. If my convalescence does not advance as rapidly as I might wish, it has allowed me to make a pretty little tour in the Pyrenees with my wife. We visited, with great enjoyment, these mountains, which, if they have not the stern grandeur of the Alps, are not wanting in a majesty of their own, tempered by a peculiar grace. We must not look for many glaciers, and the eternal snows only cover a few peaks ; but one is never tired admiring the beauty of the lights upon the rocks, the graceful curve of the crests ; above all, the limpid, noisy waters that bound along on every side. Even the Alps themselves have nothing to compare with the circus of Savernia. Picture to yourself, not a circus, but rather the vault of a cathedral, 1800 feet high, covered with snow, furrowed with cascades, whose white foam boils over rocks of the most glowing colours ; the walls are, as it were, hewn perpendicularly ; when the clouds float above them, they look like the draperies of the sanctuary ; and if the sun shines, the radiant torch is not too brilliant to illuminate an edifice that one would fancy had been commenced by the angels, and interrupted by some fault of man's."

He was delighted with the population of the mountains, with their antique faith and traditions, and their picturesque costumes that seem a guarantee for the primitive simplicity of their manners. "How," he asks, "can we impute our modern corruption to these peasants, who have preserved the little Basque cap of their fathers, with hair falling to their shoulders, and a scarlet vest set off by a beautiful white waistcoat, a belt, short breeches, and gaiters ?"

They made a pilgrimage to Betharram, a shrine of the fifteenth century, still much frequented, and where Our

Lady is venerated under the title of Notre Dame au Rameau d'or. A golden branch was offered as an *ex voto* by a young girl, who, having fallen into the neighbouring torrent, made a vow to Our Lady, and at the same moment found under her hand a branch, to which she clung. I too," exclaims Ozanam, "am clinging with all my might to the saving branch, to her whom we call the comfort of the afflicted and the refuge of sinners."

The Abbé Perreyve had gone on with Ozanam to Biarritz after the usual season at Eaux-Bonnes; but his cure being considered sufficiently complete, he was allowed to return to Paris, after some weeks of sea-air. The parting was a solemn one. Ozanam insisted on accompanying his friend as far as Bayonne, where the stage-coach awaited the traveller. "It is an hour's drive from Biarritz to Bayonne," says the Abbé Perreyve, continuing his short narrative; "this hour was the last I was ever to spend with him on earth. God permitted him to have the presentiment of it. He conversed on the way upon grave subjects concerning himself and me, and relative to general affairs, the state of the Church, the conduct we should observe in the present circumstances, and the hopes which the future held out. He spoke as if it were for the last time, and I listened religiously.

"When we reached the high-road of Spain, that point where the towers of the cathedral of Bayonne became visible in the distance, he changed his tone; he told me he knew the hand of death was upon him, and that we should doubtless never meet again.

"I shared all these fears, only with more hopefulness; that is to say, with more illusions, and I honestly tried to combat his sad forebodings. But he was not to be shaken; he spoke to me of his approaching death with an assurance that bore down all my motives of hope; and when our

carriage drew up before the coach that was to take me on to Paris, he grasped my hand in a long pressure. We alighted. I had barely time to get my little luggage secured in its place, and to settle about the fare, when it was time to part. He embraced me fervently, and said, 'Henri, bid me a good farewell.' I felt my heart breaking, but not a tear came. I followed him with my eyes, as long as that consolation was possible; at last, a turn in the road suddenly hid him from me, and I never saw him again.

"It was towards evening. When we reached the top of the hill that overlooks Bayonne, the sun was sinking into the shining waves of the sea, a mantle of purple and gold encircled all the landscape, the sands of Biarritz sparkled in the distance through a mist of fire, an artificial flame marked where the lighthouse stood, and our eyes were riveted on this signal, lost in an ocean of light. The spectacle, far from dispelling my sadness, expanded it, as it were, to the infinite. Through this glorious revelation of light, of love, of beauty, I saw, at one glance, all the happy days of which this evening was the decline, and, regret bringing me back to him to whom I owed its charm, I beheld him as a friend lost to me for ever. I was grieved not to have shown him more affection; I spoke to him; I greeted him from afar; I swore to be eternally faithful to him; but the future held out no promise of consolation to me. I heard his voice still bidding me 'Farewell!' I fell into a sadness so deep, that my soul was for a time submerged in it."

Yet even after this supreme farewell Ozanam was not without his intervals of hope. He spoke cheerfully of the benefit his health had derived from the sea-bathing and lovely climate of Biarritz, and alluded to his recovery "being probably postponed till next summer," always

adding the proviso, "that is, if God wills that I should recover at all."

Idleness, inaction, and the separation from his friends, were still his heaviest trial; but when a word of complaint escapes him he quickly retracts it, and enumerates his many reasons for thankfulness. "I am ungrateful," he says to Lallier; "I have the great happiness of seeing my wife and child in blooming health, of being able to enjoy their society. I am able to devote myself to the education of my little Marie with a leisure that I never knew formerly. I ought to be happy and bless the great mercy of Providence; and yet I am depressed; I need your prayers more than ever." The arrival of his brother Charles, who had broken away from his practice in Paris to come and take care of him, was a new and great cause of thankfulness to the invalid. "He arrived the other day in a torrent of rain, this dear brother, like a rainbow—a symbol of the hope he has brought to us. After examining, thumping, feeling, and sounding me, he declares that Eaux-Bonnes has done wonders, and that I am well! How can I, in the face of this verdict, permit myself to catch the shadow of cold or fever?"

The important question now was, where he was to pass the winter. His name had been proposed as a member for the *Institut*, and he had been extremely anxious to return to Paris in November, if it were possible, in order to take personal steps for the success of his candidature, but before November had come the impossibility of this plan was made palpable. It was now a choice between remaining on at Bayonne or passing into Spain, where the climate was warmer and drier. This latter alternative attracted Ozanam, as it held out the prospect of a new country in which he was much interested, and with whose language he was already tolerably familiar. Against this

had to be balanced the fatigue of travelling in his present exhausted state. "But the worst of all fatigues is doing nothing," he declares. "It is true, I am too well surrounded for my heart to be in want of occupation, but my mind needs it sadly. When I come to the end of my day without having done anything, this idleness weighs on me like a remorse, and it seems to me that I deserve neither the bread that I eat nor the bed I lie down on."

Travelling had been his passion all his life, and he longed to seize the present opportunity, persuaded that the moral and intellectual enjoyment must compensate for whatever bodily fatigue the journey would involve. "Alas! in the presumptuous days of my youth," he says, "I spurned the sacred isle of Ceres. My desires extended on one side to the Columns of Hercules, and on the other to the shores of Palestine. How often have I embarked for the Holy Land, seated by the fireside with Madame Ozanam, tongs in hand, and turning over a half-burned log! And here I am now at Bayonne, a town half-Spanish, where most of the signboards over the shops speak the purest Castilian, and I am hesitating about pushing on to Seville!"

He broke loose one day and set off with his wife on a little excursion into Spain, which he enjoyed immensely, but paid for by some weeks of more enforced and absolute repose than ever. He contended, however, that the pleasure had not been too dearly bought; that he had garnered a stock of poetry, beauty, and delight, to feed his imagination for a month. "In former journeys my mind was distracted by the works of man. In this land, where man has done little, I see only the works of God, and I now say, with all the might of my faith, God is not only the great Geometer, the great Legislator, He is also the great, the supreme Artist. He is the Author of all poetry; He has poured it over creation in floods, and if He wished the world to be good, He also

meant it to be beautiful. . . . Yes, one is possessed by a sense of moral purity on those heights which the foot of man rarely sullies, by the brink of those cascades where none but the chamois comes to quench his thirst, in the midst of those wildernesses where the flowers open their cups only to perfume the solitude of the Most High. David had stood upon the heights of Lebanon when he cried out *Mirabilis in altis Dominus!* he had beheld the ocean when he exclaimed *Mirabiles elationes maris!*

"We too, we have stood here by the sea-shore, and we are never wearied of the grand spectacle it displays to us daily. We all know that the ocean is full of grandeur and majesty, but it is only when we come near to it that we learn how full of grace it is. We have just come back, my wife and I, from witnessing a sunset. The great star was about to disappear behind the hills of Spain, whose bold outlines we can see from hence standing out against a perfectly beautiful sky. The mountains dipped their feet into a luminous golden mist that floats above the sea; the rays followed one another in changing colours, now green, now azure, sometimes tinted with pink and lilac, then they fainted away upon the sandy beach, or else broke against the rocks that are white with foam. The wave, travelling in from afar, rose against the cliffs and danced over them in sheafs of spray with all the fantastic grace of those artificial waters that play in the gardens of kings. But here, in the domain of God, the play is eternal. Every day it recommences, and every day it varies according to the power of the wind and the fulness of the tide."

It was finally decided that they should venture into Spain, and, if the first essay proved favourable, pass the winter there. Ozanam had a great desire to visit the tomb of St. James at Compostella, but the cold was so severe that he was obliged to renounce this plan, and, after

sojourning a few days at Burgos, retraced his steps to Bayonne.

The disappointment was the greater, from the beginning having promised so well. On the evening of his arrival at Burgos he writes to his brother Charles, who had left him and returned to Paris,—"It would seem up to this that I have done well in coming, and that God has blessed our good intentions. We have had, nevertheless, thirty-three hours' journey, mountains to traverse, second-rate inns, and the rain into the bargain, which caught us on the way. With all this I have not taken cold, and I am not suffering; at three o'clock this afternoon we made our entry into this ancient capital, which calls itself the mother of kings and restorer of kingdoms—*madre de reyes, y restauradura de regnos.*"

The next day he set out to explore the old town, his first visit being for the cathedral, where he spent three delightful hours. "But on coming out," he says, at the close of an enthusiastic description of the magnificent edifice—"a work not of giants but of angels,"—"we found such torrents of rain, such a furious wind, and streets rendered so impracticable by both, that we had to give up all idea of further sight-seeing that day."

He contrived, however, when it cleared off for a short interval, "to salute the place where the house of the Cid had stood, the ark of Fernan Gonzalez, the famous Count of Castile," and to pay a visit to the house of a lady where they met one of the founders of a Conference of St. Vincent de Paul at Burgos.

In spite of "the abominable weather, which lasted three whole days, and of the inclement cold, and the stupidity of the inhabitants, who have not the faintest notion of warming their houses," the invalid escaped all unpleasant consequences, and was in high spirits with his expedition.

"I am very glad to have made this pilgrimage," he assures his brother, "it has performed more even than it promised, and will throw a flood of light on my studies, if God permits me to resume them. In this way my year of idleness will not have been quite lost. I employed my autumn as much as I could in studying Spain in the middle ages; but it was hard to form an accurate idea of a country I had not seen. The chief theatre of Spain in the middle ages is Burgos, the scene of the greater number of those heroic exploits celebrated in the popular ballads. Elsewhere I should have seen episodes, here I had the poem itself. It is, no doubt, after all, only tradition and memories, and the pleasure of saying to one's-self, *I have seen the spot.* But then there are the monuments; the admirable basilica I have described, . . . and finally two grand monasteries that we were going off to see when I interrupted my letter. The first is that of Las Huelgas, a convent of noble gentlewomen, founded by Alphonsus VIII. in 1185. . . . The second is the monastery of Trappists (Chartreux), erected by Isabella the Great, in memory of her father, King John II. . . . Here I found the apogee of Castilian art, when Spain still lived on her native genius, before she was aggrandised and saddened, and soon after oppressed by the Austrian dynasty. In a sojourn of three days I passed in review three centuries of history. How grateful I should be to God for giving me strength to undertake this journey, and to you, my dear brother, whose care prepared me for it, and to my Amélie, who has had all the anxiety of it!"

The souvenir of this rapid excursion remains to us in that lovely piece of picturesque writing entitled "A Pilgrimage to the Land of the Cid." The grace and freshness of the opening page, where the pilgrim bewails his inability to accomplish his journey to the desired goal, have seldom been surpassed:—"It used to be a favourite devotion of

our fathers to go in pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella. . . . Before returning to their own country, these pious pilgrims would visit the beach where, as the legend says, the body of the apostle was cast by the waves; here they would gather quantities of shells, with which they ornamented their head-gear and their mantles; some they took home to their children, and in the long winter's evenings these were handed round by neighbours and friends sitting by the hearth. I too dreamed of a pilgrimage to St. James, . . . but a will which overrules ours arrested me at the first stage, and brought my pilgrimage to an end, not at the tomb of the apostle, but in the land of the Cid. And so I have come home with my hands void of shells, but full of those fluttering leaves on which the traveller notes down his impressions by the way, intending to complete them later. This is all I have to offer to my friends, to my neighbours—those who share with me that neighbourhood of the mind and heart which unites so many Christians in our day, and induces them to prolong the vigil, watching in hope together, notwithstanding the badness of the nights."

After glancing rapidly at the country and the populations through which he hurries, Ozanam stops to consider Burgos under three separate aspects—as a city of heroes, of kings, and as the city of the Virgin Mother. The shadow of the mighty Cid hovers over him at every step through the city of heroes, in the castle where his marriage with Chimène was celebrated, in the church where he challenged Alphonsus IV., and compelled him to deny on his oath that he had any share in the murder of his brother; he shows us suspended from the roof of this church the famous box which the brilliant Cid filled with sand, and then pledged to two Jews for a huge sum of gold, alleging that it was filled with precious gems. He

leads us to the warrior's tomb, where, laid side by side in one coffin, he and his Chimène rest, "not parted in death." For two *reals* a valet draws aside the pall, and opens the coffin for the inspection of the curious traveller.

Ozanam shuddered as he offered the coin which paid for this irreverence. "There is always something horrible in the violation of the secret of the grave; I cannot bear the sight of those withered bones, unless sanctity has clothed them with an imperishable garment."

But the narrator does not dwell exclusively on heroic or sacred subjects. He is alive to every humorous characteristic and incident of the places and the people through which he passes. "Let not my friends imagine," he says, "that I found no better lodging and fare in the land of the Cid than he and his companions when they encamped on the dreary shore of Arlanzon. I must avenge this fair and much maligned country.... If the lodging is at best but mediocre, the kitchens are still heroic. Never did I behold suspended from a ceiling such an imposing array of dripping-pans, sauce-pans, and kettles. I gazed above all on those long files of pots, which reminded me—forgive the Homeric reminiscence—of the long file of Penelope's servants whom Telemachus hung up on the same rope in chastisement of their perfidy. The huge patriarchal chimney-piece projects into the middle of the room, and beneath its shelter the traveller finds a warm corner, without fear of scandalising the beehive of cooks, accustomed to the blessed familiarity of Spanish manners. Here his eye may rest lovingly on the tempting fried eggs, the partridges gilding themselves before the fire, and the brown chocolate foaming in the bowl. If your abstemiousness is satisfied with this, if you don't recoil from the smell of the leathern flask which testifies to the authenticity of that bottle of Malaga, if you have not the dangerous curiosity

to taste those suspicious-looking pease, swimming in the neighbouring pot, or those meats basted with rancid oil,—rest assured; we shall live. We shall live, and you will bear me no malice for having come down from my poetic heights to these prosaic realities. They have not, in truth, turned us aside from Spanish literature; for if the poem of the Cid had its birth on the battle-field, it was from the kitchen of an inn that Don Quixote sallied forth as a knight to fight the giants and avenge all wrongs."

The traveller introduces us to another sprightly scene, a tennis-court in the Basque country, where we see the elders seated on the bench of judges solemnly watching the game, while, close at hand, that faithful counsellor of contested causes, the bottle, stands cool and convenient in a hole in the wall. The spectacle of a bull-fight would of course have been an inevitable duty for the stranger passing through the city of kings, but Ozanam confesses that he was thankful to escape it, the season for that national entertainment being over. The *Plaza Mayor* of Burgos, with its graceful porticoes and symmetrical rows of windows, was not now a sanguinary amphitheatre, but a beautiful square, whose lists were only crossed by dark-eyed women going to draw water from the fountain, bearing their vessels erect on their head and singing joyous snatches as they went. He takes leave of the city by a poetic invocation to Notre Dame de Burgos: "The moment is come to take leave of these lovely scenes, which I shall never behold again, and to whom I leave a portion of my affections and regrets, as to so many other ancient towns, mountains, and shores. There is somewhere in Sicily a group of broken columns overshadowed by an olive-grove; in Rome there is a chapel in the catacombs; in the Pyrenees there is a shrine beside which the limpid waters run beneath an ivy-mantled bridge; there is in Brittany a melancholy beech, to which my

thoughts return with an indescribable charm, above all when the present hour is gloomy and the future uncertain. I will add Burgos to these pilgrimages of memory, which console me sometimes in the painful pilgrimage of life. Suffer me then to cast one long farewell glance on the grand Cathedral; let me kneel once more within the radiant sanctuary, before the Virgin of the altar-piece, and if the prayer of a Catholic scandalises you, hearken not to it: O our Lady of Burgos, . . . Queen of all Catholic cities; yes, truly, thou art 'all beautiful and gracious,' *pulchra es et decora*, since the sole thought of thee drew down grace and beauty into these works of man. Barbarians rushed forth from their forests, and seemed like incendiaries made only to destroy; but thou didst render them so gentle that they bowed their heads, and yoked themselves to chariots heavily laden, and became obedient to masters to erect churches to thy name. Thou didst render them so patient, that they did not count the centuries spent in chiselling superb porticoes, galleries, and spires for thee. Thou didst render them so bold, that their basilicas soared in height far beyond the loftiest monuments of the Romans, and at the same time so chaste, that these mighty creations, peopled with statues, breathe nought but the purity of immaterial love. Thou didst conquer even the pride of those haughty Castilians, who abhorred labour as a symbol of serfdom; thou didst disarm many hands that knew no glory except in shedding blood; instead of a sword thou didst give them a trowel and a chisel, and thou didst sustain them for three hundred years in thy fields of peaceful labour. O Notre Dame! how nobly has God rewarded the humility of His handmaid! In return for the poor house of Nazareth, where thou didst lodge His Son, what magnificent abodes He has given thee!"

On his way home from Spain, Ozanam made a pilgrimage

to Notre Dame de Buglosse, a sanctuary close to the native village of St. Vincent de Paul, to which, needless to say, he paid a loving visit. "I owed it," he explains half-deprecatingly, "to the beloved patron who protected my youth amidst so many dangers, and who shed such unlooked-for blessings on our humble Conferences. It is only a short day's journey from Bayonne. We arrived first at the little village of Pouy, now called St. Vincent de Paul, after its glorious son. We saw the old oak under which St. Vincent, when he was a little shepherd boy, used to take shelter while keeping his flock. The fine old tree only holds to the ground by the bark of a trunk eaten away by the years, but its branches are magnificent, and even in this advanced season still retain their green foliage. They seemed to me a true symbol of the foundations of St. Vincent, which look as if they were upheld by nothing human, and which nevertheless triumph over time, and grow in the midst of revolutions. I send you a leaf from the blessed tree; it will dry in the book where you place it; but charity will never grow dry in your heart."

Ozanam had felt so much better when starting on this little pilgrimage that he made it rather in thanksgiving than in supplication. He was therefore somewhat startled when, on entering the confessional in the little church, the priest, who had never seen him, and knew nothing about him, began at once to exhort him to patience and courage in suffering. This spontaneous advice struck him all the more, he confessed to Lallier, because there was something in the childlike simplicity of the old priest that reminded him of St. Vincent de Paul. "He spoke of nothing but patient acceptance of pain, of submission to the will of God in sorrow," the penitent says, relating the incident; "and this language surprised me, feeling, as I did, so strong and well." A few days after his return from

Buglosse the warning began to prove itself prophetic. The intense fatigue came on again, and with it other symptoms, the certain forerunners of the end. But he did not, or would not despond. "I am dwelling in a land of delights," he says, alluding to the beauty of the surrounding scenery; "my wife and child are in perfect health; and I, the official invalid of the family, am indulging in pranks of every sort, which, if they reached the ears of the Minister of Public Instruction, would very probably cut short my *congé*."

CHAPTER XXV.

WHILE Ozanam, lingering beneath the shadow of the Pyrenees, addresses his adieu to the land of the Cid, before setting forth on the journey which was to be his last in this world, we will pass rapidly in review those of his works which have not been already mentioned.

Every separate book, lecture, and essay that he produced formed part of the vast primary plan which he had sketched out for himself as a boy, and which he never lost sight of in his literary and professional career. The ascendency of this one idea in his mind has given to that portion of the work which he accomplished a character of unity and completeness, which is the more striking when we consider the fragmentary and sometimes inverted method which he pursued. He began with the study of Dante, and he announces later on that his purpose is to give a complete history of the Barbarous Ages, and then go on through that of the Middle Ages, up to the thirteenth century, where he will stop at Dante, as the culmination of that epoch, its epitome and its glory.

The mere outline of the unfinished monument sufficiently indicates the mental grasp required for so gigantic a scheme, while the energy of purpose and unswerving fidelity which the historian displays in its execution testify to a greatness of soul and true love of science still more admirable. For Ozanam's peculiar circumstances

laid him especially open to the temptation which besets most men of letters in those days of eagerness for ready returns and easy popularity. But he spurned the lower service, and steadily turned his back on that liberal paymaster, especially in France, called "actuality," and faithfully toiled on in the nobler path he had chosen out from the beginning.

He had been frequently advised to let his lectures be taken down in shorthand, but he could never bring himself to consent, owing to the extreme severity which he exercised towards his work and the high finish he exacted in it. In the years 1849 and 1850, however, his reluctance was overcome, and the reporters of the Sorbonne took down his *cours* on the Fifth Century. He himself was surprised at the success of the experiment, and regretted not having tried it sooner. This regret must be shared by all who have read those two beautiful volumes, which only appeared after his death, under the title of *Civilisation au Cinquième Siècle.* "The first five of these lectures," says M. Ampère, in his Preface to Ozanam's works, "revised by the author, came out in the *Correspondant.* . . . They are preceded by a preface, which is, as it were, his literary testament. These five lectures form, in my opinion, one of the finest and most finished pieces that have issued from Ozanam's pen."

The author's own introduction to the work forms the best commentary that could be written on it, and unfolds its design more clearly than a volume of reviews. This preface was written in the afternoon of Good Friday 1851, on his return from those sublime offices in which the Church commemorates the most sacred mystery of our faith. It opens thus: "I purpose writing the literary history of the Middle Ages, from the fifth century to the close of the thirteenth, up to Dante, where I shall stop, as

at the point most worthy of representing that grand epoch. But in the history of letters I shall make civilisation, of which they are the flower, my chief study, and in civilisation I recognise the chief work of Christianity. . . . As a layman, I have no mission to deal with theological subjects, and God, moreover, who loves to be served by the eloquence of man, finds plenty in our day to vindicate our dogmas. But while Catholics were absorbed with the defence of doctrine, the unbelieving seized upon history. They laid hands upon the middle ages, they sat in judgment upon the Church, judging her sometimes with enmity, sometimes with the respect due to a fine ruin, often with a levity they would not have used in treating profane subjects. We must reconquer this territory, which belongs to us, since we find it cleared by the hands of our monks, our Benedictines, and our Bollandists,—those men who did not think their life ill-spent in growing pale over parchments and legends. . . . Gibbon the historian went to visit Rome in his youth. One day, while wandering through the Capitol, the sound of hymns broke suddenly on his ear; he saw the doors of the basilica of the Ara Cœli open, and a long procession of Franciscan monks come forth, brushing with their sandals the pavement traversed by so many triumphs. It was then that indignation inspired him; he formed the design of avenging antiquity, outraged by Christian barbarism; he conceived the plan of the *Decline of the Roman Empire.* And I too have beheld the monks of Ara Cœli treading on the venerable pavement of Jupiter Capitolinus; I saw it, and I rejoiced as at the victory of love over strength, and I resolved to write the history of the progress of that period where the English philosopher saw nothing but decay, the history of civilisation in the barbarous ages, the history of the human mind escaping from the shipwreck

of the empire of letters, and traversing the flood of the invasions, as the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea, and under the same guidance: *forti tegente brachio.* I know nothing more supernatural, nothing that proves more clearly the divinity of Christianity, than to have saved the human mind."

He foresees that many will tax him with inopportune zeal, alleging that the accusations of the eighteenth century have fallen into oblivion or discredit, that a reaction, almost excessive, has set in concerning the decried middle ages; but this argument has no weight with him. Experience and history go to prove how little these sudden revulsions in public feeling are to be trusted; they come and go, "like the wave falling back from the shore it caresses." A tendency to keep aloof from these stern Christian epochs was already manifesting itself; many who were ready to admire the grand character of their genius, could not brook their austerity. "There is at the bottom of human nature an *imperishable paganism* which wakes up in every century, which is not dead in ours, and which is always ready to fall back into pagan philosophies, into pagan laws and pagan arts, because men find there the realisation of their dreams, and the satisfaction of their instincts. Gibbon's thesis is still that of half Germany; it is the thesis of all the sensual schools, who accuse Christianity of stifling the legitimate development of human nature by denying the flesh, by adjourning to a future state the happiness that ought to be found here below, by destroying that enchanted world where Greece had deified strength, riches, and pleasure, and supplanting it by a sorrowful world where humility, poverty, and chastity keep guard at the foot of the cross."

Ozanam is careful, on the other hand, to avoid falling into the opposite snare of excessive admiration for the

Middle Ages, an extreme which leads its enthusiasts to ignore their dangers, and even to justify their errors, thus apparently making Christianity responsible for the disorders of an age in which it is represented as reigning supreme over the hearts and minds of men.

"We must know how to praise the majesty of the cathedrals and the heroism of the Crusades without condoning the horrors of eternal warfare, the harshness of feudal institutions, the scandal of princes perpetually at war with the Holy See on account of their divorces and their simonies. We must see the evil as it is, that is to say, formidable, precisely in order the better to appreciate the services of the Church, whose glory it is, during these misunderstood centuries, not to have reigned, but to have fought. I approach my subject, consequently, full of horror of barbarism, and of respect for all that was praiseworthy in the inheritance of antique civilisation. . . . I write . . . because God, not having given me strength enough to guide the plough, I must, nevertheless, obey the common law of labour, and do my day's work. I write, like those workmen of the first centuries, who turned vases of clay or glass to serve for the daily uses of the Church, and in whose rude designs the Good Shepherd, the Virgin, and the Saints were represented. These poor workmen never dreamed of the future, and yet some fragments of their vases, discovered in cemeteries fifteen hundred years afterwards, come forth to bear witness and prove the antiquity of a contested dogma.

"We are all unprofitable servants, but we serve a Master who is absolutely economical, who lets nothing go to waste, not a drop of the sweat of our brow any more than a drop of His heavenly dew. I know not what fate awaits this book, whether I shall finish it, or whether I shall reach even the end of the page that flies beneath my pen. But

I know enough to throw into it the remnant, be it great or small, of my strength and of my days."

It was the year of the Jubilee, the *année sainte*, when these pages were written, and Ozanam thus touchingly alludes to the coincidence. "It was on Good Friday, in 1300, the year of the Great Jubilee, when Dante, arrived, as he said, midway on the road of life, disabused alike of passions and of errors, began his pilgrimage in hell, in purgatory, and in paradise. On the threshold of his journey his heart failed him for one moment; but from the courts of heaven three blessed women were watching over him, the Virgin Mary, St. Lucia, and Beatrice. Virgil guided his footsteps, and, on the faith of this guide, the poet plunged courageously into the gloomy pathway. Alas! I have not his grand soul, but I have his faith. Like him, in the middle of my life, I have seen the holy year, the year which divides the stormy and the fertile century, the year that renews Catholic consciences. . . .

"But whereas Virgil forsakes his disciple before the end of his career, for it was not permitted him to cross the threshold of paradise, Dante, on the contrary, will accompany me to the utmost heights of the Middle Ages, where his own place is marked out. Three blessed women will also look down upon me,—the Virgin Mary, my mother, and my sister, while she who is my Beatrice is still left to me on earth to sustain me by a look and a smile, to lift me from despondency, to reveal to me, under its most touching image, that power of Christian love whose works I am about to relate."

The plan unfolded in these pages is magnificently executed; and yet these two volumes are but the introduction, the atrium, as it were, of the temple Ozanam proposed to build. The magnitude and variety of subjects which even this fraction of the work embraces render anything like an

adequate analysis of it impossible in one chapter of a biography. We can merely glance over it, and point to the parts that strike us most by their power and interest.

Ozanam first explains the nature and essence of Paganism, its action and effect on humanity in the barbarous ages; he shows us Rome planting her victorious eagles on every soil, civilising the peoples she had conquered, making laws, encouraging letters and arts, and splendidly patronising the gods. He leads us gradually to the point where Paganism is nothing but a mask to hide the deification of Rome. The mistress of the world flings back the portals of her Pantheon, and invites the nations to come and worship; every God has an altar there; but the only divinity Rome adores is Rome; rites and oracles and priests are nothing but a pompous masquerade kept up for the entertainment of the people-king. By the time that Cæsarism had become the true idolatry of Rome, its tyranny had invaded not only the life and property of the subject, but his soul and conscience. Sometimes the god is called Nero, sometimes Trajan, sometimes Heliogabalus, but his works do not change; the Empire is always the same,—a paganism whose divinity and high-priest is the Emperor; his very statue is worshipped with divine honours; thousands of Christians are tortured and slain because they are too stiff-necked to burn a few grains of incense at its feet.

Slavery, the natural outcome of this deification, is laid bare in all its degrading cruelty. It was forbidden to kill a slave, but the freeman might lawfully torture him to death provided he paid his value to his master. The master was obliged to feed his human cattle, and the following receipt of Cato's "for making wine for slaves," gives us an idea of how tenderly this duty was performed: "Put into a cask ten amphoras of sweet wine, and two of

very sharp vinegar, and boil down till this diminishes to two-thirds, with fifty amphoras of fresh water; keep it stirred with a stick for five consecutive days, and then add sixty-four sextarii[1] of sea-water."[2]

"How truly we recognise Paganism here!" exclaims Ozanam. "This bitter draught that it prepares for the slave recalls the sponge steeped in vinegar and gall that another Roman tenders on the point of his lance to another slave dying on the Cross for the ransom of slaves." The slave, under this revolting system, became a mere beast, without soul, conscience, or intelligence. He was used to try poisons on, as we use rats and other vermin; he had no more human individuality than a dog or a horse. Seneca indeed once ventured on hypothesis that slaves might after all be men like ourselves, but this same man, who philosophised so loftily on disinterestedness and poverty, possessed twenty thousand slaves, and there is no record of his ever having freed one of them. The slaves had themselves come to believe that their owners must be right, and that they were a lower race of disinherited outcasts whom Jupiter had deprived of half their reason in condemning them to the condition of bondsmen. And the poor—how did it fare with them? Worse than with the slaves, if that were possible.

And yet such was the prestige of Roman power, that in spite of the degradation and corruption it bred in its dominions, the most enlightened philosophers believed the salvation of the world identical with its reign, with the endurance of an empire which Tertullian said "alone suspended the end of time." When the news went forth that the Goths were marching on Rome, that Alaric was before the gates bargaining with Honorius for the city, its

[1] A Roman measure equal to twelve bushels.

[2] Cato, *de Re Rustica*, i. civ.

inhabitants and its treasure, even St. Jerome, in the depths of his Eastern solitude, trembled and cried out in dismay, "A terrible report reaches us from the West. They talk of Rome besieged, ransomed with gold, besieged again, so that lives may perish after property has gone. My voice is choked, sobs stifle the words I am dictating."

The mighty genius of St. Augustine alone viewed the great catastrophe undismayed. Amidst the clash of warring races, of empires falling to pieces and thrones crumbling under Gothic battle-axes, Augustine calmly looks back to the origin of time, and forward to its fulfilment, and discerning the destinies of Rome and the world through the light of Christianity, he proclaims the law of Christian progress in his wonderful work, "The City of God."

The barbarians brought a stream of fresh manhood into the effeminate empire they overturned; they introduced those two primary elements of all civilisation, the dignity of man and respect for women; they set the slave free; they raised woman, from a base instrument of man's pleasure, into a divinity; they placed her on a pedestal and knelt to her as the Velleda who could foretell their destinies and avert them.

Christianity entered through this breach in the wall of Paganism, and, following up the work begun by the barbarians, enthroned woman as a queen on her own hearth, the equal of man, his guardian angel and comforter, thus developing into a virtue what was but a primitive instinct in the savage mind.

Christianity changed the slave into the working man, and was the first to reinstate him in a position of dignity and independence. The early Christians worked for their bread; the Anchorites, Cenobites, and Monks gave more time to manual labour than to contemplation. Cicero had worked at manual labour, and declared there could be

"nothing liberal in it;" the Gospel exalts it, and imposes it as a duty upon all men.

Paganism despised the poor, and even held it wrong to succour wretches who were abandoned and cursed of the gods; Christianity proclaimed them blessed. Poverty was thus established in a society that was expiring of over-luxury and wealth; chastity was crowned and glorified in a society that was destroyed by its own corrupt excesses; obedience became the law where all was perishing from disorder.

Ozanam describes at considerable length, and in language of singular beauty, the change which Christianity effected in the social position of woman; and he shows, too, how worthily she performed the duties imposed by her new privileges, and what a noble part she played in the progress of the religion to which she owed them. Fearing, however, that he might be suspected of sympathising with unreasonable claims which had already begun to be put forth in her name, he adds, "We must not conclude from this that Christianity had destroyed what nature had done; that it meant to precipitate women into public life and re-establish that absolute equality which the materialism of our age has dreamed of. No; Christianity is too spiritual to accept such an idea. The *rôle* of Christian women was something similar to that of the guardian angels,—they might lead the world, but while remaining invisible themselves. It is very seldom that angels become visible in the hour of supreme danger, as the angel Raphael did to Tobit; so is it only at certain moments, long foreseen, that the empire of women becomes visible, and that we behold these angels, who were the saviours of Christian society, manifesting themselves under the name of Blanche of Castile and Joan of Arc."

Christianity had been accused by a certain school of

having corrupted the Latin tongue, whereas, on the contrary, it was Christianity that saved it. Even in Cicero's time its purity was affected, as we learn from his complaints that "the great influx of strangers is adulterating the language." And Quintilian, under Vespasian, laments, too, that in his day "the whole language is changed." Christianity came not to destroy but to rescue Latin, and the chief instrument in this redemption was the *Vulgate*, translated, as we know, in part from the Greek, in part from the Hebrew, and thus destined to penetrate the minds of the people with the poetry of the East on one side, and on the other with the philosophical lore of Greece. The Bible itself was served in this mission by two unlooked-for auxiliaries, the Africans and the people—that is to say, a people half-barbarous at the period we speak of. Ozanam lays considerable stress on this African character introduced into the Latin literature by Cornutus, the disciple of Seneca; by Fronto, the master of Marcus Aurelius, by Nemesius, by Tertullian, who brings in his wake St. Cyprian, and, above all, St. Augustine. Whatever importance may be legitimately attached to this innovation, it is clear that the Christian tongue dates from Tertullian, and that it is destined to be the language of the Middle Ages, and the mother tongue of all modern languages. This is what Christianity accomplished through the instrumentality of the *Vulgate*, and with the Africans and barbarians as helpmates. "Our ancestors were right to carry the Bible in triumph and cover it with gold," says Ozanam. "The first of ancient books is likewise the first of modern ones; it is, so to speak, the author of these very books, for it is from its pages that were to come forth the languages, the eloquence, the poetry, and the civilisation of modern times."

The concluding chapters of *La Civilisation au 5me Siècle*

show the gradual development of those things in detail :— history, poetry, art, the material civilisation of the Empire up to the formation of the neo-Latin nations. The charm and vigour of the style are sustained to the last page, and carry even the unlearned reader with unabated interest through labyrinths of research which excite the admiration of the most erudite.

Historians had opened a gulf, as it were, between antiquity and barbarism. It has been the triumph of Ozanam to bridge this over, and, by his patient genius and original investigations, to re-establish those lines of communication which Providence never allows to fail in time any more than in space.

A year or so after Ozanam's death this work was crowned at the Académie Française, which adjudged to it the annual prize of ten thousand francs, just then founded, for the finest literary work produced within the year. M. Villemain was charged with the panegyric for the occasion, and as the opinion of so illustrious a critic is in itself a valuable testimony, we cannot refrain from quoting the following passage from his speech :—" Learned and natural, always dominated by the same idea, while radiant with a thousand memories, accurate and full of charming fancies, this book is an eminent work of literature and taste. It raises criticism to eloquence ; it conceives and seeks and finds eloquence itself in its highest source, in that type which never dies, or which rather is for ever born anew in the native instinct of a soul that vibrates to the good and the beautiful, to everything noble here below, virtue, liberty, science, and to those great truths above which constitute the promise of Christian faith and hope."

The most superficial perusal of these volumes enables us to form a pretty good idea of what Ozanam's completed work would have been. We see here how he performed

the preliminary task of clearing the ground, making his way step by step through the gloomy night of barbarism until the first streak of dawn appears, and the Gospel enters and plants the regenerating doctrine of Christ crucified on the ruins of the effete and spurious civilisation of Rome.

This picture was to have been followed up by another, equally comprehensive and finished, of all the barbarous tribes in the wild, free life of their native forests. We should have seen them encamped on the ruins of the Empire, and watched them gradually conquered by the teaching of the Church, learning to respect those things which they had intended to destroy—religion, letters, and art. Advancing through the dreary waste of the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, we should have come to Charlemagne, who with one hand arrested the tide of the invasion, and with the other rekindled the all but extinct light of letters. This would have brought us to that period when the seeds of a new and fertile literature were beginning to germinate—when the young idioms were lisping their first songs of chivalrous romance, and the enthusiasm of the Crusades was drawing the chivalry of Europe to the East, while, simultaneously with this glorious movement, the Communes were awakening to their liberties, and the schools were filling the world with the noise of their learned strife—thus, step by step, we should have reached the thirteenth century, which ushers in the Christian Renaissance.

Ozanam has handled almost every point of this immense programme in the course of his work, but the only portions of it that he accomplished thoroughly are the beginning and the end. The History of Civilisation in the Fifth Century, and Dante or Catholic Philosophy in the Thirteenth Century, the *Études Germaniques* and the *Poëtes Franciscains* find their places at separate intervals between

these two works, which he calls "*les galons extrêmes de mon ouvrage.*"

Les Études Germaniques form two volumes, entitled *The Condition of the Germans before Christianity*, and *Civilisation amongst the Franks;* in other words, the ecclesiastical, political, and literary history of the Merovingian period and the reign of Charlemagne, the study of the German people previous to their transformation by Christianity, and the study of this transformation in itself. Ozanam is assisted in his laborious expedition through this remote and obscure past by Tacitus and some German *savans;* but they lend him at best a flickering light. As we see him plunge into the sombre regions he has undertaken to explore, we are unconsciously reminded of an adventurous traveller embarking on the obliterated pathways of one of those notorious forests of Germany, with no light to guide his steps but a feeble torch, whose vacillating flame every gust of wind threatens to blow out. He does full justice to the erudition and honesty of his precursors, but he contradicts them at every turn, challenges their assertions, disproves their facts, and refutes their arguments. He tears up the flimsy delusion of patriotic writers, who, like Gervinus, the historian of German poetry, sentimentally bewail "the mildness of Catholicism, which has destroyed their warlike ancestors." Ozanam follows up the study of the ancient religion of Germany to its earliest origin, in order to show what were the obstacles and the resources which it was one day to present to Christianity. "Many German historians, in discovering in the traditions of their fatherland those grand notions of the Divinity, of immortality, and of justice, which sustain the whole human conscience, have reproached the Christian missionaries with having come to disturb a people who had no need of them, and of having calumniated creeds that they did not

understand. It is consequently a novelty in favour now-a-days to absolve idolatry, to justify even those obscene idols which the ancients adored, we are informed, in innocent simplicity. . . . It was therefore necessary to show the excess to which superstition was carried by these peoples, and how it was leading on to the overthrow of all the protecting laws of humanity, if the Gospel had not come in time to reinstate them." The historian goes on to show how everywhere, in manners, customs, laws, and creeds, barbarism reveals its true character of savage violence, cruelty, and immorality. He does not deny the existence of the noble ideas which the enthusiasts of Paganism claim for it, but he shows that these elements of true greatness and power are not radically either pagan or German; they are simply a remnant of Christianity, which links the most famous creeds of antiquity to the creed of the Gospel; such were the laws for the protection of family ties, property, public justice, and other fine traits which bear a striking family resemblance to the legislation of the East; the languages, too, bear many signs of kindred with the Latin, Greek, and Sanscrit tongues, while their poetry contains an unmistakable ring of the old fables of the classical apogee. The traces of a tradition, common alike to the nomad tribes of the North and the more polished races of the South, is everywhere visible. Everywhere we see the same essential conditions, however disguised under special characteristics; it is always an old order of things at war with the spirit of disorder and destruction, always strife and antagonism, the inevitable and distinctive character of barbarism; the upheaving of that "imperishable paganism" which Ozanam declares to be an inalienable instinct of human nature.

These preliminary studies announce plainly enough whither the conclusion tends. The predominant idea from

first to last is the fraternity of the German nations with the two great races of the North, the Celts and the Slavs, as well as with the Southern races; the radical unity, in fact, of the Indo-European peoples as demonstrated by the immigration of tribes, by the comparison of mythologies, by the resemblance of laws, languages, and religions, and a subsisting basis of principles and traditions. "There is no people, however barbarous, in whom we do not detect some vestige of civilisation struggling to defend itself, there is none so refined but that we can put our finger on some root of barbarism which nothing can eradicate. At the bottom of every community, as in the depth of every human conscience, we come upon law and revolt, we find contradiction and disorder; that is to say, what God has not put there."

It required nothing short of the courage of Christianity to claim brotherhood for the fierce rude German races with the refined Greeks and Romans, and it was a task worthy of modern science and Christian philosophy to undertake to search out and produce the links of this kindred. "It was reserved to philology," says Ozanam, "that is to say, to a study which is counted idle and barren, to arrive at these fertile discoveries, to refute the conjectures of the materialists, and to establish, by the community of language and ideas, an incontestable community of origin between the blue-eyed stalwart races who wandered through the wildernesses of the north, and those other races browned by the sun, small-limbed and hot-blooded, who built cities, opened schools, and dug out ports under the fiery skies of the south."

We do not pretend to estimate this dogma, to discuss its merits or its flaws; we merely aim at giving some idea of the work before us, of its research, its power of syn-

thesis, its clear, subtle analysis, and that union of qualities which render history a science as admirable as it is useful, a science which lays bare to mankind the story of their travail and mission in the past, making it a light to them for the accomplishment of their destinies in the yet unacted drama of the future.

Ozanam proceeds in the second part of this first volume to show us the conflict between the Germans and the Romans. He describes the causes of the power of Rome and of her weakness, her conquest of Germany and its results: cities founded, roads made, forests cleared away, Paganism thus despoiled of those sylvan solitudes where, as in an inaccessible stronghold, its gods abode, the entire mechanism of imperial civilisation—political institutions, military and municipal systems, schools, etc.—is examined and judged with rigorous impartiality; its merits and vices are faithfully depicted. We watch the decline of letters in the imperial schools; we see the growing cruelty of the Roman government, and the implacable hatred with which it is regarded by the vanquished race. It had conquered the territory and taken the people captive, but there was one fortress beyond the reach of its victorious arms: this was the human conscience, and so long as this remained impregnable, the victory was incomplete; the conqueror was defied by an element of resistance which, sooner or later, must triumph, and prove to him that no force of arms, however tremendous, can annihilate that which alone and truly constitutes a people—their nationality.

Yet Ozanam would not have us conclude that the mission of Rome in Germany was altogether fruitless or fatal. "When Providence takes such workmen, as the Romans for a work, we may be assured," he says, "it is for no ordinary purpose." "When it permits a country to

be for three hundred years ploughed up by fearful wars, we may know that God means Himself to scatter the seed in the furrows. At the moment when Drusus was throwing bridges across the Rhine, and cutting roads through the Black Forest, it was time to make haste, for ten years later a town of Judea would give birth to Him whose disciples were to pass along these roads, and complete the destruction of barbarism. The laws of the Emperors, so learnedly commented on by the jurisconsults, were introducing the reign of justice, which prepared the way for the law of charity. The Latin tongue was helping the human mind to acquire those habits of clearness, precision, and firmness which are as necessary to the progress of science as to the maintenance of the faith."

The second volume of the *Études Germaniques* goes on to show how this conquest, which baffled the legions of Cæsar and the prestige of Rome, was achieved by the omnipotent sweetness of the Church of Christ. The Franks, who had become the first champions of the Gospel, took the Cross in their hand, and, plunging into the dark forests beyond the Rhine, went forth to attack barbarism in its very citadel. They used no weapons but love, gentleness, and self-devotion; but, stronger with these than the soldiers who had overcome the world, they triumphed; patience conquered those stout hearts and rebellious natures, which the power of arms had proved powerless to subdue. The author dwells with peculiar force on the three great events which decide the complete triumph of Christianity,—the conversion of the Franks, the preaching mission of the Irish, and the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. The mission of the Franks is clearly defined from the moment when the conversion of Clovis enlisted them under the flag of Christianity, and made them suc-

cessors to the Romans in arresting the tide of invasion; they make Christianity penetrate by degrees into pagan laws and institutions, until its reign becomes universal and secure under the glorious sceptre of Charlemagne. We see the barbarous nations, under the benign influence of the Gospel, bringing forth a new civilisation and a new empire, whose growth and fruits are admirably described in the closing studies, entitled *The Church, The State, The Schools.* With Charlemagne the era of barbarism ceases, a new era begins, and a new society is established.

Ozanam brings out the mission of the Irish race in striking relief. "The monastic people of the barbarous ages, the missionary people destined to carry the light of faith and science into the gathering darkness of the West, are a people whose sufferings are better known to us than their services, and whose marvellous vocation we have not sufficiently studied—the Irish."[1] The historians of modern civilisation are apt to trace it exclusively to the decay of the Empire and the invasion of the Teutonic races, overlooking the fact that the Romans were coming to an end just as the Germans were beginning, and that they were too old and worn-out to complete the education of the on-coming race, so that it required a new generation to continue the chain and rejoin the links. This, Ozanam says, was the mission of the Celtic race, which he shows us at an early period spreading itself like a fertile seed over part of Germany, of Italy, Spain, Gaul, Brittany, and Ireland. The church of Gaul soon cast the nets of her proselytism over the rest of the Celtic nations; and while early in the fifth century she was sending St. Loup and St. Germain to appease the troubles excited by the Pelagian heresy in Brittany, she was bidding a Gallo-Roman named Patricius, found the monastic life in the cloisters

[1] *Études Ger.*, vol. ii. p. 112.

of Marmoutiers and Lerins and then go forth and bear the tidings of the Gospel to the Irish.

"This virgin island, on whose soil no proconsul had ever set his foot, which had known neither the exactions of Rome nor its orgies, was also the only spot in the whole world of which the Gospel took possession without resistance and without bloodshed. The first fervours of the faith which in other lands drove the Christians to martyrdom, drew the neophytes of Ireland into monasteries, and St. Patrick rejoiced to see the sons and daughters of the chiefs of the clans ranging themselves under the rule of the cloister in such numbers that he could no longer count them. . . . Christianity, which has always dealt tenderly with converted nations, which spared the temples of Italy and Greece, did not lay the axe to the sacred woods of the Irish. The grave genius of the Druids passed, with their science and their traditions, to be purified by the monks. The nuns of Kildare kept up near the church of St. Bridget a sacred fire, which was still alight there after six hundred years. . . . St. Columba, on a rock of the Hebrides, lived in familiar intercourse with the wild beasts of the desert; and when St. Kevin prayed with outstretched arms, we are told that the birds came and laid their eggs in his palms. The bards lured the people after them to the monasteries, taking with them the national harp, the songs and memories of the land; saints sought relaxation from their austere labours in listening to the flute-players; the poetry of the nation finds a vent in its legends; and while the monk is enclosed within the narrow walls of his cell, his imagination wanders over the seas with St. Brendan, or roams through the invisible world on the footsteps of St. Patrick."[1]

1 *Études Ger.*, vol. ii. p. 114.

We must refrain from further quotations, difficult as it is to resist giving some of those delicate legends which Ozanam delights in, and interweaves so gracefully with the austere and learned narrative of these ancient island saints.

We lay down these two volumes, unable to decide which most commands our admiration, the eloquence of the writer or the erudition of the historian. It is rare to find the two qualities united in one man; the slow patient research and analysis of the *savan* are apt to prove fatal to the *élan*, the inspired impulse, of the orator; for we must recollect that these glowing chapters were lectures delivered spontaneously; but Ozanam possessed the twofold power of oratory and erudition. "One was as natural to him as the other was," says Lacordaire, a competent judge of both; "he was great when stirring up the dust around him with the miner's mattock, and great in the full light of day, with the direct glance of the mind's eye. It was this that composed his moral nature—a mixture of *solidity* with young and ardent enthusiasm."[1]

The following letter may be appropriately inserted here:—

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT TO MADAME OZANAM.

"La Roche en Breny, Côte d'Or,
22*d Dec.* 1855.

"How kind of you, Madame, to have thought of sending me that precious volume! I should certainly have procured it *myself*, but coming from your hand it is infinitely more precious. I shall have it bound, and keep it by me against the return of those sufferings which I earnestly wish I may learn to bear with the patience and fervent piety of your husband. I noticed with pleasure and with tender emotion some letters of his at the begin-

[1] *Frédéric Ozanam*, p. 45.

ning of the *Livre des Malades.* One longs for more of them, for it was there that his soul poured itself out fully. . . . I was all the more touched by this souvenir that has come to me so unexpectedly from you and from *him*, because I have been living in community of studies and thought with him for some time past. I have a volume of the *Études Germaniques* always open before me, and I am forced to acknowledge, with a pardonable sort of despair, that M. Ozanam has left absolutely nothing to be said by those who come after him to glean in the fields where he has reaped. The affection that I have always borne him, and my reverence (*culte*) for his blessed and noble memory, can alone console me for being thus always left so far behind by his eloquence and his loyal erudition.

"My wife wishes me to remember her specially to you. Your image is constantly present to us, and your name recurs continually in our conversations.

"Believe in the respectful attachment of your most humble servant, CHARLES DE MONTALEMBERT."

We have now to speak of *Dante et la Philosophie Catholique au treizième siècle.* The prestige of Dante's name is so sublime that it requires some courage to approach it, even under the protection of an authorised guide; yet it is impossible, in the most cursory notice of Ozanam's works, to pass by in silence that which is perhaps the most widely known of them all.

Our readers have probably not forgotten the profound impression he received when, on standing for the first time in those chambers of Raphael which he designates "the sanctuary of Christian art," he beheld amidst the doctors of theology, in the "Dispute of the Blessed Sacrament," a figure "remarkable by its originality, a head crowned, not with the mitre or the tiara, but with a wreath of laurel, yet

noble and austere withal, and nowise unworthy of that high company."

Why is Dante Alighieri placed side by side with the angel of the schools, with St. Bonaventure, Savonarola, and other accredited teachers of the divine science? This sudden inquiry awakes in the mind of the boy tourist a reverent curiosity which deepened with years, and gives us the true motive and immediate scope of the present work.

No book written by man has begot so much commentary as that immortal song, which Gioberti[1] styles "the human Bible of modern society;" from the fourteenth century to the nineteenth it flows on in an unbroken stream, each age bringing its peculiar character and spirit to the task of criticising, interpreting, elucidating; and yet Cesare

accuracy of the facts. Each school contains a principle of truth and a principle of error. Of truth, inasmuch as these four elements all exist in the poem, but are so harmoniously balanced, and grouped round the central idea in such exquisite symmetry that we may apply to the *Divina Commedia* those words of Dante describing the beauty of Beatrice, ". . . sola il suo Fattore tutta la goda." Of error, because, instead of viewing these elements as distinct, yet harmonising in a perfect whole, each commentator detaches one from the rest, and works it to excess, neglecting the others, and thus straying from the lines of full and accurate interpretation.

The ascetic school slips into mystic subtleties that end by clouding the poem, effacing the true Dantesque idea, and replacing it by neo-Platonism [redacted]

mind, and yet the work which most victoriously embodied this, the book to which he sacrificed his life, and which, as he pathetically puts it, "made me lean for years," had come down to us after six hundred years shorn of the greater portion of that philosophical interest which its author prized above every other.

This was the task which Ozanam set himself to accomplish: to reconstitute this mutilated portion of the poet's glory, and rehabilitate that formula of starry and translucent truth with which, guided by his seeing eye, the Florentine penetrated into the inmost mystery of life and human destiny.

Nothing in the Middle Ages has been more calumniated than their philosophy. It is represented as turning in a groove of systems, quarrels, and sterile speculations, having for its instrument a barbarous, indocile, and pedantic language. Dante stands forth to vindicate this maligned period, and he does so in an idiom intelligible to women and children. He takes up one of these semi-barbarous mediæval tongues and shows us what can be done with it; in his hands the Italian vocabulary expands to the breadth of his vast comprehension; it grows strong with his strength, sweeter with its sweetness, its mellifluous tones borrow a more liquid music when they become the medium of his inspired thoughts.

The secret of Dante's immortality lies in that union of philosophy with poetry which his sublime song presents; the *Divina Commedia* addresses itself to doctors, princes, souls of every class and in every age, and all listen entranced, "understanding every one in his own tongue." A poem which embraces such an illimitable range presents an horizon too vast for any one critic to span. And Ozanam wisely confines himself to one aspect of the work, that which, he says, "is the least cultivated, but perhaps

the most fertile." But to do even this thoroughly involved an immense toil. A philosophical system is not an isolated fact, "it is the produce of the concurrence of all the faculties of the soul, and these faculties, in their turn, obey the anterior education they have received, and external impulses. It is therefore necessary to begin by studying the general aspect of Dante's epoch, the phases of contemporary scholasticism, the special characteristics of the Italian school to which he belongs, the studies and vicissitudes that fill his life, and the effect which these united causes must have exercised on his destinies."[1]

The answer to these inquiries would involve the solution of endless historical questions. It would be necessary, in order to sift the various mediæval conceptions grouped together in the *Divina Commedia*, to trace them up to their original sources, starting from the Eastern sanctuaries, and proceeding through the Arab, the Alexandrine, the Latin, the Greek, and the Christian schools; but as no individual life would suffice for such a process, Ozanam takes only a rapid glance along the vista; like Dante before entering the circle, he looks and passes on, granting but a brief interview to each period, school, and personage. But with Beatrice he lingers; before this sweet conception, this heavenly light whom all surrounding beams irradiate, who combines the very essence of the mystic song, its divine philosophy and its purest earthly interest, the enthusiasm of the commentator gives itself free vent and rises to ecstasy. Others have written wisely and beautifully about Beatrice, have analysed, exalted, explained her; but Ozanam, like Dante himself, tunes his lyre to a seraphic key, and sings like one who worships. Avoiding the two rocks on which his predecessors have split—one school regarding her as a purely abstract symbol, the other as

[1] *Dante et la Phil. Cath.*, Introd. p. 65.

nothing but an earthly reality—he shows us Dante passionately loving the woman, longing for her, losing her; we see his life irreparably impoverished by the loss of this ideal which it never possessed, but which was destined to colour it as no reality could have done; we see him pass from sombre despair to exulting adoration, and rise up from his sorrow to sing of her "as no man has yet sung of woman;" we behold the transformation of the reality into the symbol, we see the mystic waters rise from their source at the crystal throne, we watch them flow to meet the stream of human tears, where, blending in one translucent wave, they bear Beatrice from our sight, until we behold her emerge on the golden heights of vision, as the heavenly lady who will guide her votary through the effulgent circles of Paradise.

It is difficult to see how the most uninitiated student of Dante can fail to recognise this twofold character of the poem, or to understand how any controversy could have arisen about it in the face of his own assertion. "The sense of this work," he says in the curious letter where he dedicates *Il Paradiso* to Can Grande, "is not simple, but multiform. There is first the literal sense, and then the sense hidden under the letter." It would seem that he attached more weight to the real than the allegorical sense, for he adds in the same letter, "The aim of my work, the aim of the whole and of every part of it, is to rescue the living from their misery and guide them to happiness, not only in the next world, but in this."

Yet in spite of this authority, the multiform character of the poem was denied by commentators up to a very recent period. Ozanam has, it is generally admitted, thrown more light on its complex meanings than any other modern critic. He sees, in the poet's wondrous capacity for love, the secret of his true poetic mission,

and shows us how this love, its growth in sorrow and supreme development in worship, is the experience that was needed to work out his destiny to its fulfilment. "According to the laws that rule the spiritual world, the attraction of one soul is needed to elevate another. This attraction we call love; in the language of philosophy it is also called friendship; in that of Christianity it is called charity. Dante was not to escape the common law. At nine years of age, that is to say at an age whose innocence admits of no impure suspicion, he meets at a family festival, a child full of nobleness and grace. This sight awakes in him an affection which has no name on earth, and which he preserves tender and chaste during the perilous season of youth; dreams where Beatrice appears to him in her radiant beauty; an indescribable yearning to find himself in her pathway; a bow, the merest inclination of the head, in such things as these did he place his happiness. He was a prey to fears and hopes, to joys and sadnesses that exercised his sensibility and purified it to the most extreme delicacy, disengaging it by degrees from all vulgar habits and solicitudes; but, above all, when Beatrice quitted this world in the bloom of her youth, his thoughts followed her to that invisible world of which she had become an inhabitant, and he delighted to adorn her with the choicest flowers of immortality; he surrounded her with the canticles of the angels, he seated her on the highest steps of the throne of God, he forgot her death in the contemplation of this glorious transfiguration."[1]

[1] *Dante et la Phil. Cath.*, p. 119.

It is generally assumed that grief at Beatrice's death was what first awoke Dante's poetic genius. He himself would seem to prove that it was despair at her marriage. That morning, after he met her in the streets of Florence, robed in white, and accompanied by women older than herself—clearly on her way as a betrothed bride to the church—and when she spoke to him those words which filled him with such joy that he

Grief drove Dante to seek consolation in the writings of Cicero and Boetius, St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bernard, Richard of St. Victor, and these noble masters amply rewarded his patient study. It was not long before philosophy became the mistress of his soul, ruling it as Beatrice had done, but with austerer sway. In order to perfect himself in her service he travelled in pursuit of science to all the great Universities of the day. The *Inferno*[1] and *Paradiso*[2] bear traces of an itinerary which, passing through Arles, Paris, Bruges, and London, would seem to land the illustrious student at Oxford. Ozanam refrains from pronouncing on its accuracy, but holds it for certain that Dante passed some time in Paris, where, in company with the common herd of students, he attended the lectures of the learned Sigier in the Rue Fouarre; but here, as in his native land, science closed her gates against him. He gained the highest grades, but he was not received into the Academy, "because he was too poor to pay the fees." So he wended his way back to Italy, and at Verona sustained a thesis "on the elements of fire and water" with an *éclat* which mayhap consoled him a little for the loss of academical honours. One year later he died, and Guido Novello placed a crown of laurels on his tomb. Thus we see in Dante three distinct lives, each complete in its sphere,—the citizen, the

thought he had "reached the limits of beatitude," he went home and had that vision where he sees her held up in the arms of a man, who awakes her with the words, "Ego Dominus tuus," and, after constraining her to eat the burning heart, bears her away, "his joy being suddenly changed to bitter lamentation." Dante at once sits down and writes his *first* sonnet, which he sends round to several friends, asking them to interpret it; but they all fail to do so, as he tells us in the *Vita Nuova*.

We are indebted for this idea—entirely original, as far as we are aware, though so transparently suggestive—to the unpublished notes of an accomplished Italian scholar, Mr. Augustus Craven.

[1] *Inferno*, ix. 38; xii. 40; xv. 2.

[2] *Paradiso*, x. 47, etc.

poet, and the philosopher. We see him in possession of "those three faculties," says Ozanam, "which, united in certain proportions, compose genius—intelligence to perceive, imagination to idealise, will to realise."

It would seem but too true that the pure memory of Beatrice failed to preserve worthy of it the life where it was so magnificently enshrined. Ozanam, with all his reverence for Dante, does not attempt to palliate his faults, but he alleges deprecatingly, "they have a wonderful secret for making you overlook them—repentance. In the thirteenth century, the art, so common now-a-days, of legitimising vice by complaisant doctrines was little known. Sooner or later men came to seek in religion that grace of expiation of which she is the immortal dispenser." Dante comes before us in this penitential attitude, as he himself describes it, "with downcast eyes, like a child that confesses its fault," avowing in the face of all future generations the follies of his youth. The *Vita Nuova* is the naïve confession of his early years; the two books *de Vulgari Eloquentiâ* are a philological *apologia* of the despised idiom which he used as the instrument of his finest inspirations; the *Convito* is the outpouring of those philosophical doctrines which he had gathered from the sages of antiquity and modern doctors. Then follows the work of which these are the heralds and the preparation, the *Divina Commedia*. But earth was too narrow a stage for this vast, unfathomable poem. True poetry is an intuition of the infinite, a perception of God in creation, a divine instinct reaching to the life beyond life, uplifting the soul with a sweet and powerful might of inspiration, and compelling it to seek its abiding-place in that boundless realm which is the natural home of immortality. In every remote period, and amongst the rudest tribes, we see this instinct guiding the literature of mankind, seeking in the invisible a refuge for

the noblest human needs, invoking the supernatural, though it be but in horror, as an instinctive canon of poetic art. The *Divina Commedia* is the grandest affirmation of this truth which human genius has yet produced. Dante's eagle flight chafed within the limits of time and space; he passed beyond them through the gates of death, and placed his poem in the infinite. From this stupendous stage he contemplates the world, he sees the nations like the tribes of old coming up one by one, an endless procession, to the judgment-seat; he passes sentence on the rulers and the peoples, justly but pitilessly; he uses without mercy that terrible scourge of satire which the prophets wielded when the world was young; he takes up Jacopone's rod, and in his hand it becomes a serpent whose bite stings like fire. Science serves him as a docile handmaiden; his seer's eye dimly descries in coming years the worlds that Newton and Columbus are to discover. But his Muse is led by a loftier star than physical science or philosophy. Religion and sorrow are his guides; these lead him into the mystic sanctuary where only they may enter; they initiate him into the cause of existence, the sanction of the decrees of conscience, the germ of future misery and happiness contained in our merits or demerits here below, the final result of human actions. The study of human actions becomes naturally thenceforth the one whose interest absorbs him above all others, though he interweaves it with the most varied and seemingly irrelevant ones. Standing beyond death he conceives a plan of the philosophy of life, of universal science. But though Dante's thoughts were steadily centred in death, they bear no traces of that egotism which, as Ozanam says, "hides itself so frequently under the appearance of melancholy." Strong human sympathies still bound him to the great heart of humanity, and drew him back to the scenes where the fiery passions

of his youth had found an outlet. Ozanam feels so strongly this sympathetic current flowing from Dante's soul that he claims him as the prophet of democracy and of the revolutions of modern society. "Doubtless," he says, "Dante borrowed from the publicists of his day many of the arguments on which he supports the monarchy of the Holy Empire. But the Empire, as he conceives it, is no longer that of Charlemagne. . . . It is a new conception, reaching to two great things; on one side to the primitive Roman Empire, where the prince clothed with the tribune's power represents in his triumph the plebeians conquering the patricians; on the other, the French monarchy raising itself by alliance with the communes on the ruins of the nobility. The depositary of power, even under the name of Cæsar, with the imperial diadem on his brow, is in Dante's eyes no more than the immediate agent of the multitude, the level which renders all heads equal. Amongst all privileges, none is so odious to him as that of birth; he shakes feudalism to its base, and his rude polemics, in attacking hereditary honours, do not spare hereditary possessions. After seeking for the regenerating principles of a social philosophy in the highest regions of moral theology, he follows out their deductions relentlessly to the most extreme and impracticable democratic maxims."[1]

But if Ozanam proclaims Dante the precursor of modern ideas, from his having been the first who gave a moral, political, and universal direction to the philosophical sciences, he is careful to exonerate him from complicity in the excesses of which our days are witness. "He did not deify humanity by representing it as self-sufficing, with no light but reason, no rule but its own will. . . . He saw that it was not all here below, where it passes, as it were, in swarms; he went first of all to seek it at the end of the

[1] Partie iii. p. 362.

journey, where the innumerable pilgrims of life are gathered for ever. It has been said of Bossuet that, with the rod of Moses in his hand, he drove the generations to the tomb. It may be said of Dante that he awaits them there with the scales of the last judgment. Leaning on the truths which they should have believed, and the justice they should have served, he weighs their works in the balance of eternity. . . . Thus, with the idea of an eternal destiny, morality re-enters into history; humanity, humiliated under the law of death, rises up with the law of duty, and if we deny it the honours of an arrogant apotheosis, we spare it the opprobrium of a brutish fatalism."[1]

After measuring the various points of contrast and analogy which exist between Dante's philosophy and other systems, ancient and modern, Ozanam comes to the question which has engaged all the commentators of the poet for three centuries—his orthodoxy. "Protestantism," he says, "at its cradle felt the necessity of creating a genealogy which should link it to the Apostolic times, and justify in it the accomplishment of those promises of infallibility which the Saviour has left to His church. . . . It is not exacting in the matter of proofs; a few embittered words, dropped from the pen of a celebrated man on contemporary abuses, suffice to place him at once in the catalogue of these pretended witnesses of the truth. Dante could not escape this posthumous honour. . . . Various passages of his poem, ingeniously tortured, appeared, it was alleged, to contain derisive allusions to the holiest mysteries of the Catholic liturgy" (*Par.* xxxiii. 12). It was not unnatural that English lovers of Dante should seize with avidity anything that struck them as evidence of his Protestant affinities; but if the Protestants of the sixteenth century tried to claim him for their own, it was

[1] Partie iii. p. 367.

reserved to the zealots of the nineteenth to make him out a freemason; M. Aroux has written a learned treatise on the subject, and proved the charge of freemasonry to his own satisfaction. The honour of originating the idea does not, however, rest with him. Ozanam relates how, when emancipated from the fatal influence of the Seicentisti, Italian literature returned to worthier traditions, the worship of the old poets of the fatherland was turned to account by the secret societies, who grafted their religion and political theories upon it. "And in our own day, when the heads of the conquered party, worthy of all respectful pity, sought refuge in England, the need of something to while away the dreary leisure of exile, perhaps also the desire to recognise in some way Protestant hospitality, inspired the new system proposed by Ugo Foscolo, and supported by M. Rossetti, not without a vast display of science and imagination."[1]

Witnesses, however, were forthcoming to avenge Dante and rescue him from these profanations. Foscolo has found learned contradictors in Italy (Cesare Balbo and the editors of the Milanese edition of the *Convito*), and Schlegel, the oracle of German criticism, has refuted exhaustively the paradoxes of Rossetti.

The fierce invectives with which the exiled Florentine pursues the Roman Court and certain Popes have furnished a ground of suspicion against him to many; but Ozanam answers this charge by the obvious Catholic argument, that Papal impeccability is a totally distinct matter from Papal infallibility. St. Bernard and St. Thomas of Canterbury head the list of canonised saints who in evil days stood dauntlessly forth to denounce the iniquities of Popes and the corruption of their courts. If Dante overstepped the bounds which the filial reverence

[1] *Dante et Phil. Cath.*, p. 372.

of these servants of the Church respected, we must remember that he was not a saint, but a man of proud and fiery temperament, swayed by strong passions, and self-charged with a mission which exacted more severity than mildness. Yet his violence, even in its fiercest paroxysms, is acquitted of the slightest stain of heresy by those who hold the right to judge it. Catholicism is not so careless of its glories. The orthodoxy of Dante was defended and established by no less an authority than Bellarmine in the seventeenth century. Three Popes accepted the dedication of the *Divina Commedia*, Paul III., Pius IV., Clement XII., and the Roman edition of 1791 was sanctioned by the same supreme authority. Even in the poet's lifetime, the shafts he levelled at contemporary corruption and abuses laid him open to the charge of heresy, and an ancient tradition tells us how the Roman Inquisition dealt with it. His poem, on its first appearance, was rigorously examined by the doctors of theology, and certain Brothers-Minor, noting that passage where St. Francis meets Dante, and asks for news of the Franciscan order, because for so long a time it has sent nobody to heaven, took offence, and summoned the satirist before the Inquisition. "Dante appeared before the judges after vespers, and begged for a delay until the morrow, that he might draw up his creed in writing, consenting, if he erred in any point, to undergo the deserved punishment. He watched through the night, and the next morning, at tierce, presented his *credo*, in the form of a poem of 250 lines, wherein every article of the faith was separately treated. The Inquisitor having read it in presence of his council, composed of twelve masters in theology, dismissed the poet, and laughed at the brethren, who were mightily astonished to see such a wonderful composition produced in such short delay."[1]

[1] Ozanam's *Purgatorio*, p. 628.

This record is to be seen in the MS. 1011 of Riccardiana at Florence, and, even admitting a doubt on its veracity, is invaluable as proving what the contemporary estimate was of Dante.

Homer has been styled the theologian of pagan antiquity, and Dante has been called in turn the Homer of Christian times; but the comparison, if it glorifies his genius, dishonours his religion. "The blind poet of Smyrna has been justly accused of lowering the gods too near to man, while none better than the Florentine has known how to elevate man and raise him up towards the Godhead. It is by this, by the purity, by the immaterial character of his symbolism, by the infinite breadth of his conception, that he leaves so far behind him all ancient and modern poets, and above all Milton and Klopstock. If we would raise one of those comparisons which fix in the memory two names associated to recall and define one another, we may say, and it will be the *résumé* of this study, that the *Divine Comedy* is the literary and philosophical *Somma* of the Middle Ages, and Dante the St. Thomas of poetry." [1]

Thus Ozanam brings us back to the point from which he started, to that fresco of Raphael's, where the laurel-crowned figure, standing side by side with St. Thomas, first awoke his curiosity and prompted the research which was to solve the puzzle. How far he has succeeded in his task each one will pronounce according to his individual judgment and sympathies. For our part, we confess that in every line of the august epic we see the philosophy of Dante, like all the philosophy of the middle ages, ever the obedient handmaiden of theology. Whether he penetrates into the mysteries of Creation, or unravels the truths taught by the Church, or opens the inspired writings of prophets

[1] *Dante et Cath. Phil.*, p. 381.

and evangelists to gather in their divine arcana rules and types and a voice to proclaim their hidden meanings, we see ever shining on his page the serene and dazzling light of a gigantic human intellect illuminated by faith. His poem is a glorious psalm of worship, a voice from the very heart of humanity chanting the praises of God; all created things, ice and fire, abysses and floods, the trees of the forest and the stars of the firmament, are called in to swell the chorus; all through creation, in nature and beyond it, in life and death, from the happy realms above, from the desolate deeps below, the voice rings loud and clear like the roar of many waters shouting out Hosannah! And yet in the midst of the glowing visions where the song resounds, through mystic dreams and fiery shudderings and raptures of delight, we never lose sight of the entrancing spectacle of a human soul, suffering, heroic, intense. Whatever be the scenes through which we pass, whether they be full of tragic satire, or pathos sweet as the breath of heaven, or tenderness passing the love of woman, we hear the chords attuned to the same dominant key, that of Dante's sublime and powerful personality.

Ozanam has left us only an unfinished monument, a mere fragment of an almost infinite design, yet there are few writers whose works are less marred by a sense of incompleteness. At times no doubt his genius rises higher than at others, and flashes out in its maximum of power, but he never falls below his habitual level of finely-balanced thought, true poetry, and philosophy. He had the enthusiasm of a real poet, but it never carried away his judgment; his thought was always strong enough to bear the utmost weight of emotion without being obscured or defaced; his style is finished as a cameo, musical, delicate, and masterly; the diction is invariably pure and choice, though it occasionally sins from over-redundance of imagery,—his desire

to express his idea perfectly leading him sometimes to an exuberance of words, for however absorbed he was in his subject, Ozanam never forgot that others were listening who required explanation. His eloquence in its most impulsive movements—and it is full of impulse—is always free from exaggeration. He was preserved from this by what, for want of a better word, we call taste, that delicate instinct of the imagination which tolerates no excess. French critics are fond of instituting a comparison between the style of Ozanam and his two celebrated contemporaries, Berryer and Montalembert; yet, except in their contrasts, it is difficult to see what there is to suggest it. The philosopher and historian seldom reaches that triumphant energy that marks the eloquence of the two political orators. His power is of a different order altogether; it is penetrative and convincing rather than dazzling, and lingers on the mind like the glow of sunset long after the meteoric flash of the more brilliant stars has died away.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1853.

AND now we are on the threshold of the closing scene. We are approaching that hour which puts the seal on every life—that hour which, even on this side of the grave, is like the opening of the Book through which the secrets of hearts are revealed. It is always a mournful spectacle, though generally an instructive and sometimes a consoling one, to witness the last great crisis of a human soul, to watch the light going out, to listen to the changing accents of the well-known voice, to note, it may be, those "fears of the brave and follies of the wise," which come to mar the beauty and completeness of the final act, adding poignancy to our grief, and lingering in the memory like a pain or a dim, distressing doubt. We have no such experience to fear from Ozanam. He will not disappoint us in death, who in life was faithful to his noblest self. Softly heroic the life had been all through, and now we shall see the same gentle heroism enduring to the last.

All that he had loved in life he loves now with a warmer tenderness and a clearer appreciation. In the days of his boyhood he had gone through Italy enamoured of her beauty, and singing her praises with the poetic fervour of a young heart. He is going through the sunny land again, conscious that the journey is the prelude to his entrance into the valley of the shadow of death, and yet we hear him just as of old bursting out into passionate delight as

the scenes of familiar beauty break once more on his sight. He forgets the cruel throes of disease, the exhausting languor that makes every step a pain on the way to Nice, and goes into ecstasies over "the road of magic beauty, bordered with olive-trees and orange-trees all in full bearing, to say nothing of the palms that we saw at long distances waving over some Roman ruin. Yet admirable as this is, it seems nothing when you arrive near the Antibes, and suddenly behold the great curtain of the maritime Alps unfold itself and close in the horizon, mountains whose brow is crowned with snow, while their base is plunged in a shining sea. It is only then that the Pyrenees and the coast of Biscay are conquered! All creation is there, with the majesty of the glaciers and the wealth of the tropical climes: olive-trees as large as our finest oaks, orange-trees growing in forests, oleanders flowering wild in the dried beds of rivers, aloes and cactuses as in Sicily." His heart exults in the beauty of God's beautiful world, and he sees the hand of the Creator everywhere,—in the grand waving palms "that are worthy to be borne before our Saviour on the day of His triumphal entry;" in the glorious hills "that are surely a bit of the terrestrial Paradise where God walked and conversed with Adam." All the old memories and sympathies are strong as ever as the time approaches for separation, and he dwells on them lovingly and gaily. "What was there to prevent our fancying ourselves on the coast of Syria in the time of the Crusades, especially when the battlements of an old dungeon or some ancient chapel peeped above the neighbouring hill-tops?" he says playfully to M. Cornudet, and then goes on to describe how, although no swarthy Saracen bore down on them to bar the way, "*ces dames* (his wife and her mother) declare that as we were ascending the Esterelle, men armed with hatchets prowled for a whole

hour about the carriage, casting terrible glances at it. If this fact should not appear to you sufficient to constitute the robber episode which ought to be found in every journey worth the name, I assure you it is amply completed by the multitude of honest brigands who, under the name of innkeepers, hat in hand, have been fleecing and despoiling us during these two hundred leagues. In order that nothing should be wanting in our epopee, we came by sea from Genoa to Leghorn, and that perfidious element treated us as so many heroes: the winds were let loose, the billows rode over the deck, and Madame Ozanam's trunk was so thoroughly soaked that, on alighting at the hotel, she was compelled to make the finest exhibition of clothes hanging out to dry that has ever been seen since the days when the Princess Nausicaa washed her linen."

The monuments of man's genius claim his admiration and interest, as formerly, next to the works of God. Those of Pisa fascinate him by their "young, virginal grace, which it is impossible to describe. The cathedral, an edifice of the eleventh century, before the first Crusades, that is to say, the creation of a period reputed barbarous, but which after the lapse of eight hundred years of civilisation the world is forced to contemplate with admiration," inspired the traveller with one of those lyrical outbursts that his intimate correspondence is full of. "When you enter the bronze gates, and, standing at the end of those five naves divided by a forest of pillars, behold resplendent in the mosaic of the vaulted roof the colossal figure of Christ, seated as He will appear on the last day, upon a throne of glory between the blessed Virgin and St. John, you feel for one moment overpowered by the divine majesty, you recognise truly the eternal Son of the Father, you rejoice that our Lord has allowed a people to build Him a temple that is almost worthy of Him. The fear of

God, the sense of the nothingness of man, the legitimate pride of the Christian, all these emotions are spontaneously awakened, and you understand those words of the Psalmist, 'How beautiful are thy tabernacles, Lord God of Hosts!'"

The unrelenting rain which had spoiled and checked their Spanish tour followed them to Italy, and Ozanam congratulates himself that there are at Pisa some places of resort which he can visit and enjoy under shelter from the torrents. "A library of sixty thousand volumes gives me pretty nearly all I want in the way of history and ecclesiastical and municipal antiquities," he says, and then relates, with that generous pride in the kindness of others that was one of his characteristics, how courteous and obliging everybody is in the said library; how the learned Professor Ferucci has ensconced him at a table in a comfortable corner free from draughts, and how genial and intelligent are all the authorities. "We have in fact a little Athens here, and I am the more justified in calling it by this name in that there are a round hundred of good Greek students. But I must admit that these sons of Aristides and Philopœmen are less assiduous at the schools than at the theatre, and have the name of not paying their debts." The mention of schools and scholars naturally calls up the image of other seats of learning to which the exile's heart turns yearningly. "Ah! my poor Sorbonne!" he exclaims, with a sigh, "how often do my thoughts go back to the blackened walls, the bleak courtyard, the studious, begrimed halls which I have so often seen filled with the generous youth of Paris! Dear friend, next to the infinite consolations which a Catholic finds at the foot of the altar, next to the joys of family life, I know no greater happiness than that of addressing young men who have heart and intelligence." He owns, as if confessing to a foolish weakness, that the memory of this young, eager, sympathetic crowd

is continually pulling his heart-strings back to Paris; he asks for news of the examinations, and "how the Baccalauréats are getting on," with the tender interest of a man recalling the scenes of his own youthful struggles in the learned Alma Mater. The very thought of being able once more to ascend his chair, and lay his hand on the vibrating crowd around it, stirs him with an irrepressible thrill of delight; he dares not dwell on the hope, but turns aside with a "Fiat! it will be well, however it ends, for it will be as God wills. *Volo quomodo vis, volo quamdiu vis.*"

His pleasure in his friends, in their sympathy, their joys and pursuits, is as keen as in the days when he was free to share them all actively. "I know not what God may ordain for us henceforth," he says to his old colleague M. Lenormant, whose battle he had fought so bravely, "but I know that in choosing our friends for us He has done quite enough for the honour and happiness of our lives. Whatever bad opinion I have of myself, I cannot believe that He has created me to do nothing, when he has made me acquainted, one after another, with the grandest Christians of my time and the most chosen souls. Their affection, as you truly say, supports and encourages me; it helps me to bear trials which are, indeed, tempered to my weakness."

He is away over the Atlantic in spirit with M. Ampère, excited by the stirring scenes through which the erudite traveller passes, and which he describes in his letters home. "I have stood with you in the midst of the prodigious activity of man, and admired the strange aspects of surrounding nature, the flaming sunsets that surpass those of Italy and Greece. You have given me friends too in the new world as in the old; through you I have penetrated into the very heart of the University of Cambridge; you

have introduced me to men whom I scarcely knew, and whom I now love, Everett, Agassiz, and above all, the poet Longfellow. I owe you a delightful hour in his cottage, with the book of his poems in my hand; thanks to your superior lights, which have been as precious to me as your friendship, I have been able to judge the literature of America at one stroke. I see it compelled to link itself to the old traditions of Europe, and I admit that the ocean no longer divides us."

But the consolation which Ozanam gave thanks for above all others was the fervent activity of the Conferences which he found established in the various places he passed through. "Our little Society of St. Vincent de Paul has a great share in the pre-occupations and consolations of my journey," he says to M. Cornudet, writing from Pisa. "I saw the presidents at Marseilles and Toulouse, where the respective conferences number 200 and 400 members. I saw also the president of Nice, a man full of zeal, and as amiable as he is pious. But what charmed me above all, what fills me with hope for the future of Italy, are the conferences of Genoa, all so fervent and so discreet, amidst the religious perils of the country; the president of these conferences understands the work as if he had been engaged in it with us these twenty years, and he goes about propagating it with indefatigable activity in the duchy of Genoa and in Tuscany. . . . See the designs of God! In 1847 I passed through Tuscany, and became acquainted with some zealous and influential men; I gave them the rules of the Society, and I left them determined to do something. But no one could see the use of it in a country that was already so good, so Christian, and so rich in old established charities. The revolution came, however, and ploughed up these soft soils; its ploughshare tore up many institutions that only held on by dry roots. And lo! we now behold

a new proselytism multiplying our conferences: the ecclesiastical authorities lend it their countenance, religious orders commend it, fervent laymen become enrolled in it. The conferences are flourishing at Leghorn and at Pisa; they are beginning to prosper at Florence and Pontadera; they are being established at Prato, about to be so at Volterra and Porto Ferrajo; here then we shall have seven families of St. Vincent de Paul in this fair Tuscan land, where Catholicism was languishing, stifled, as it were, under the golden chains of Josephism. But the most important thing of all, and that which touches me most, is that the primitive spirit of our Society has communicated itself so wonderfully to our new brethren. I have met with all the simplicity and cordiality of our early beginnings amongst them. Don't picture to yourself solemn, cold meetings of old parishioners in black silk skull-caps. Not that the old are excluded; but I see with pleasure a great effluence of young men, students, merchants' clerks, sons of noble families, university professors, and the draper round the corner, all elbowing each other, and all led by first-rate presidents. I cannot tell you how attached they all are to the centre of the Society, nor what an amount of consideration they have shown to the vice-president of the *Conseil-Général.*"

The conference of Florence was a subject of special joy and edification to Ozanam. "In this capital of Josephism," he says, "a learned canon,[1] whose mother is lady of honour to the Grand Duchess, devotes all his zeal to the propagation of our confraternity. I had the consolation of assisting at one of their meetings, as I did at those of our *confrères* of London and Burgos. Tears of joy start to my

[1] Guido Palagi, a canon of the cathedral, who died in September 1871. He was followed to the grave by the entire population of Florence, whom he had edified by his heroic virtues during a long life.

eyes when at these great distances I meet our little family, always little by the obscurity of its works, but great through the blessing of God upon it. The tongues are different, but it is always the same friendly clasp of the hand, the same brotherly cordiality, and we can recognise each other by the same sign as the early Christians: 'See how they love one another!'"

He is delighted with the great concourse of people in the churches and at the Divine offices, even on week-days, at Pisa, where, "so different from our France, one sees not only *des gens comme il faut*, but workmen, peasants, coachmen, and market-women in such numbers, that one has to elbow one's way through them to get to a seat on one of the benches that replace our *prie-dieu*." But this consoling manifestation of faith does not blind him to other facts. He sees Protestantism making tremendous efforts in Italy, "and meeting with the sympathies that it already excited in the sixteenth century. There is a great liberty for publishing and selling," he adds; "I have seen translations of the very worst French books figuring on the stalls of the little book-pedlars at Florence. The clergy are frightened, and fright does good, inasmuch as it wakes them up. The Church sees that she is on the eve of recommencing a life of struggle, and the near approach of the combat renders possible now works that six years ago would have been considered inopportune."

Genoa offers the same varied character to his observation. "In this most democratic of cities I found pretty much the same physiognomy as in Paris at the end of 1848. The book-shops and stalls expose for sale the most audacious pamphlets; Protestantism, Fourierism, and every description of socialism, placard their special propaganda. . . . On the other hand, there is a great awakening of Catholicism in this country, which has been so long asleep,

a serious effort to resist the propaganda of the enemy; there are five conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, counting those of the suburbs; and at the head of them are men of talent and activity. Here at Pisa the Revolution seems to have passed over the heads of the people, and to have acted only on the upper classes. There is a great deal of faith amongst the people, at least if one may judge from the churches overflowing with men even on the week-days. In the middle classes, and amongst the students, Voltairianism is rife, but the case is different amongst men of letters and *savans;* many of these are still Italians of the last century, minding only their own business, abusing the priests every now and then, but performing their duties as Christians. Others are converts, men of noble minds, open to all that is generous in the new ideas, but reduced to silence by Austrian bayonets."

An incident occurred in connection with the foundation of the conferences in Tuscany, which Ozanam, with characteristic modesty, refrains from mentioning even in his intimate letters home. It was true that when he arrived at Pisa he found the Society was known there, and already counted many admirers, who were eager to propagate it; but their efforts had been crushed in the bud by the Grand-Ducal Government, in whose eyes the whole thing bore a dangerous and suspicious character. The struggle to overcome this opposition was all but given up when Ozanam arrived at Pisa, and he at once took zealous steps towards reviving the movement. His name carried weight with it; for he was well known, even celebrated, in the country on account of his work on Dante, which had been enthusiastically applauded, and translated several times into Italian. The Dowager Grand-Duchess heard of his arrival, and coming one day to Pisa, sent word to him to

wait upon her the same evening. He was extremely ill just then, and it required an heroic effort to rise from his sick-bed, and betake himself in full dress to a royal audience; but no personal sacrifice could deter Ozanam when there was a chance of furthering the cause of charity. He got up, and was at the palace at the appointed hour. The Grand-Duchess was a large-hearted woman, possessing a cultivated mind and a genuine zeal for good works; she received the pale, dark-eyed Frenchman with kindness and sympathy; but she was strongly prejudiced against his work, and bluntly told him so; adding that the Grand-Duke believed the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to be a hotbed of socialism and political intrigue, and that he never could be induced to sanction its presence in his States unless certain men, whom she mentioned, were dismissed from amongst the members. Ozanam answered these accusations with respectful boldness; he told the story of the origin of the little confraternity, and how from the very starting its founders had directed that it should be a work of charity, from which the political element should be rigorously excluded; this primary condition of the Society made it incumbent on them to receive indiscriminately any person who presented himself, provided he was an honourable man and a Christian. He spoke with great warmth and all the glow of an enthusiasm purified, but not abated, by suffering and the approach of death. The Grand-Duchess listened with profound attention, and a few days later the conference at Florence received formal notice of the sanction of the Government.

Ozanam was induced to speak at the opening *séance*, and his speech, delivered of course in Italian, was considered so fine that it was printed in all the newspapers next day. He was annoyed beyond measure, and declared he never would have spoken had he foreseen such a result.

"It is entirely contrary to the spirit of the Society, which is to work in obscurity and make no noise," he said. Soon after, they again begged him to address the conference; he only consented on the express condition that the offence was not repeated. The next day, however, several important members came to entreat him to release them from the promise; he resisted their persuasions for three days, but at last yielded to the prayer of his confessor, who assured him the speech, if circulated, would probably lead to the formation of a conference at Loreto. He gave permission for one hundred copies to be struck off; but this was extended to twelve hundred, a piece of treachery which the orator did not quite forgive, until he found that it had led to the forming of conferences at Macerata, Porto Ferrajo, and in Sardinia, where the speech of the "celebrated French Professor" produced a great effect.

The success of this effort seemed to give new life to Ozanam, and, in spite of the dreary, disappointing winter, with its eternal rain, he gradually gained strength towards the spring, and with it his hopes of a possible recovery revived.

"They don't disguise from me the fact that my illness is slow and difficult to cure," he says to M. Ampère, in the first days of April; "but as there is now no fever, and as I still keep by me two excellent doctors—sleep and appetite,—they give me good hopes, and allow me to think of returning home by the end of April, and even to talk of resuming my *cours* on the 15th of May! Meantime we have had some painful hours and great anxiety. All agreed that a warm and dry climate was absolutely essential for me, and we have been living for over sixty days in a continued down-pour of rain, which is constantly calling up these lines of Dante:—

'Io sono al terzo cerchio della piova
Eterna, maledetta, fredda e grave:
Regola e qualità mai non l'è nuova.'

"It is possible to read the *Inferno* in spite of the rain, but one cannot carry one's dreams to the Campo Santo, where the torrents are enough to wash out all that remains to one of the history of Job. . . . We stay at home by the chimney-corner; but consolations are not wanting in this home which trial has visited; you know what an angel of goodness dwells therein, and what a merry imp enlivens it. . . . Moreover, God, who is the best of friends, never abandons those whom He tries; at this moment He has granted me a mental serenity, which is not usual to me. In this peaceful city, in the midst of this life of rest, I seem to taste the sweets of family affection more deeply, to caress the memories of friendship more at my ease; I have leisure to look into my own heart, and I find much to correct there; but I think I find peace and faith there, and this suffices for many moments of pure happiness."

We repeat it: few men, out of the ranks of the saints, were more diligent in giving thanks than Ozanam. It was a favourite exercise of his to recall, in meditation, all the graces and mercies he had received from his childhood upwards, and to return thanks for them one by one. On the day of his marriage, when he took his young wife home, he told her how he had suffered from doubts when a boy, and how he had been delivered from them, and sworn to devote himself ever after to the defence and service of God's truth; he then asked if she would join him daily in giving thanks for this particular mercy; and every night from that day forth, until the last that he spent on earth, they sent up their act of thanksgiving together.

In the midst of his keenest sufferings, gratitude, the sense of the alleviations and blessings granted him, rose

above every other feeling. His letters all through this painful winter are like canticles of thanksgiving:—"You know her whom God has given me for my visible guardian angel; you have seen her at work," he writes to an old friend from rainy Pisa; "but since my illness has become serious, you can have no conception of the resources she has discovered in her heart, not only to relieve but to cheer me; with what ingenious, patient, indefatigable tenderness she surrounds my life, guessing, anticipating every wish. Happily God gives her strength for it; she and my little Marie are in perfect health just now. My mother-in-law also has made her pilgrimage to Rome without any mishap; we hear from her often, and also from my brothers and many friends. We have some kind and agreeable visitors who bring a little new life into our solitude, and we have good and beautiful books in abundance. So you see that Divine Providence, while trying us, does not forsake us. God treats us mercifully; and if there are days of despondency, there are moments too of exquisite enjoyment between my wife and my child. I know that my malady is serious, but not utterly hopeless; that I shall take a long time to recover, and that I may never recover; but I try to abandon myself lovingly to the will of God, and I repeat—more with the lips than with the heart, I fear!—*Volo quod vis, volo quamdiu vis, volo quia vis.*"

One day, at San Jacopo,[1] he took a piece of paper and wrote down, in the form of a prayer, an enumeration of the many "little kindnesses" he had received from God. "We are not sufficiently grateful for God's little benefits. We thank Him for having created and redeemed us, and given us good parents, and a wife and beloved children,

[1] It was to this village on the sea, near Leghorn, that that grand soul Mrs. Seaton came with her dying husband. They remained there a month; she left it a widow.

and for so often giving us Himself in the Sacrament of the Altar. But beside these powerful graces, which support, so to speak, the woof of our life, how many delicate graces are wrought into the tissue! There was the steady comrade I met during my first year at college, and who edified instead of corrupting me; there was M. Ampère's paternal welcome, and M. de Chateaubriand's advice to me not to go to the theatre. And then, smaller things than these, an inspiration that prompted me to go and see my poor on a day when I was in a bad humour, and sent me home ashamed of my imaginary woes by the side of the appalling reality of theirs. How often has some insignificant circumstance, an importunity, a visitor that bored me, and whom I wished at Hong-kong, been the occasion later of enabling me to do good to some one."

He forced himself to write in a comparatively hopeful tone, but he had in reality little or no hope of ultimate recovery. "During the three last weeks of Lent," he says to M. Ampère, "I was preparing myself seriously for the final sacrifice. It cost nature something, yet through God's help it seemed to me that I was beginning to detach myself from everything except from those who love me, and whom I can love elsewhere than here below. But my poor wife prayed so hard, and got so many prayers said, that I begin to revive, and without being cured I may venture to hope for a cure. The worst of it is, that I attach myself again at once to life, and all the vanities of life. According as I begin to think seriously of seeing Paris again, I think of my work, of my schemes, and—must I own it?—of the opinion of the learned and the public! This draws me off to the circulating library—another piece of vanity; I read the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, . . . and I ask myself if you could not find a page there to devote to my *Poëtes Franciscains*. But would it be possible for you to find time to

occupy yourself with these beggars? And yet they deserve something at your hands, for you know what your friends Dante and Giotto owe to St. Francis. . . . My poor *Poëtes*[1] have found a cordial welcome here. Cardinal Maï was greatly taken with the life of Jacopone, and sent me many kind complimentary messages. . . . See what comes of a half-and-half convalescence! Perhaps to-morrow a relapse will come and make short work of my literary projects, but to-day the stray sunbeam that is awakening the flowers wakes up my hopes and ambitions too."

He said truly, it was but a stray beam, a passing respite in the struggle. The malady was working its way slowly but inexorably; the improvement that showed itself from time to time was only a delusive one, a transient alleviation caused by some new remedy, or a change of climate, or sometimes by an effort of the vigorous will asserting its supremacy over the exhausted body. Ozanam underwent every remedy that was proposed, often even when he had no belief in their efficacy; his cheerfulness, his unselfish thought for those around him, enabled him to disguise his own hopelessness, in order not to destroy the faint hopes of others. Prayer and meditation on Divine things were the fountains from which he drew his serenity and courage. He had loved the Scriptures above every other book all his life; it had been his practice from boyhood to read a portion of the Gospels every day; he called this his "daily bread;" he generally read the Bible in Greek from an old edition that he was fond of. Now that evil days were come, and that he was called upon to prove himself, he remained faithful to this habit of his life. Every morning, the first thing on awaking, he gave half an hour to reading

[1] The *Poëtes Franciscains* had come out in detached articles in the *Correspondant*, and were already widely known, but they were published in a collective form only about this time.

the Bible, and at the end of his meditation he would note down the texts which had penetrated him most during the course of it, in order that he might refer to them; and rest his mind on them throughout the day. He derived such extraordinary comfort and sustenance from this practice, that it occurred to him he might in his helplessness still render a last service to other invalids by pointing out to them the passages that had soothed and nourished his own soul in the course of his illness. His wife gladly acquiesced in the suggestion, and every morning wrote down some pages from his dictation. These have since been put together and published under the title of *Le Livre des Malades.* On the 23d of April, his birthday, and the anniversary of his marriage, he wrote in his own hand the following lines :—

"I said : In the midst of my days I shall go to the gates of hell ; I sought for the residue of my years.

"I said : I shall not see the Lord God in the land of the living. I shall behold man no more, nor the inhabitant of rest.

"My generation is at an end ; and it is rolled away from me as a shepherd's tent. My life is cut off as by a weaver ; whilst I was yet but beginning he cut me off ; from morning even to night Thou wilt make an end of me.

"I hoped till morning ; as a lion so hath he broken all my bones : from morning even to night Thou will make an end of me.

"I will cry like a young swallow ; I will meditate like a dove ; my eyes are weakened looking upward. Lord, I suffer violence ; answer Thou for me.

"What shall I say, or what shall he answer for me, whereas he himself hath done it ? I will recount to thee all my years in the bitterness of my soul.

"This is the beginning of the canticle of Ezechias. I

know not whether God will permit me to apply to myself the end of it. I know that I complete to-day my fortieth year, more than half the ordinary term of man's life. I know that I have a young and beloved wife, a charming child, excellent brothers, a second mother, many friends, an honourable career, studies brought precisely to the point when they might serve as the foundations of a work long dreamed of. And yet I am a prey to a long and grievous malady, which is the more dangerous that it hides perhaps a complete exhaustion. Must I then leave all these things that Thou Thyself hast given me, Lord? Wilt Thou not be satisfied with a portion of the sacrifice? Which of my irregular affections must I immolate to Thee? Wilt Thou not accept the holocaust of my literary self-love, of my academical ambitions, of even my projects of work, wherein mayhap there mingled more of pride than of pure zeal for truth? If I sold half my books and gave the price to the poor, and, confining myself to the bare duties of my position, were to consecrate the rest of my life to visiting the indigent, teaching apprentices and soldiers, wouldst Thou be satisfied, Lord, and wouldst Thou leave me the happiness of growing old beside my wife, and of finishing the education of my child?

"Perhaps, Lord, Thou dost not so will it. Thou dost not accept these interested offers, Thou dost reject my holocausts and my sacrifices. It is myself Thou dost ask. 'It is written in the beginning of the Book that I must do Thy will,' and I said, 'Lord, I come!'

"I come, if Thou callest me, and I have no right to complain. Thou hast given forty years of life to a creature who entered this world sickly, fragile, destined to die ten times, if ten times he had not been rescued by the tenderness and intelligence of a father and mother. Let not my people be scandalised if Thou dost not see good now

to work a miracle in order to save me! . . . Five years ago Thou didst bring me back almost from death, and was not this delay granted me to do penance and become better? Ah! the prayers that were sent up to Thee then were heard. Why should those that are being offered now, and in so far greater number, on my behalf, be lost? Perhaps Thou wilt answer them, Lord, in another way. Thou wilt give me courage, resignation, peace of soul, and those ineffable consolations that accompany Thy real presence. Thou wilt enable me to find in illness a source of merit and of blessings, and these blessings Thou wilt cause to fall on my wife and my child—on all those to whom my labours perchance would have been less useful than my sufferings. If I express the years of my life with bitterness before Thee, it is because of the sins that have sullied them; but when I consider the graces that have enriched them, I look back upon them, Lord, with gratitude to Thee.

"If Thou shouldst chain me to this sickbed for the days that I have yet to live, they would be too short to thank Thee for the days that I have lived. Ah! if these pages be the last I ever write, may they be a hymn to Thy goodness!"

Such were the outpourings in which Ozanam's soul sought comfort amidst the cruel distress of bodily sufferings. But he did not force himself to dwell exclusively in sublime and solemn thoughts. When a respite from pain restored his strength a little he seized the opportunity to send letters to absent friends, full of the old brightness.

"I am deeply touched by your kind reproaches," he says to the Marquis de Salvo, in one of these breathing spaces, "but assuredly I should not have deserved them if my pen were as ready as my heart; if my thoughts, which are so often at the Rue d'Angeulême, could transform

themselves into a letter and fly to you on white wings. But, alas! those poor thoughts have lost their wings, if ever they had any, and this forced inaction weighs heavily on my spirit. What little *verve* was left me I have spent on Ampère, whom it is my interest to conciliate in his quality of Academician, and to persuade that I have not sunk quite to the level of the beast! I have exhausted all my topics with him too. . . . My wife adores this country, but she is, above all, in love with the fishermen and their pretty barks with lateen sails: she has made a vow, that if I recover, we should sell our books and buy a boat, and go off singing with the Italian coral-fishers along the coasts of Sicily and Sardinia. Luckily I did not go partners in the vow; I hold to fatherland, and I suspect that the first sail that bears me away will be set towards France."

M. de Salvo was a Sicilian gentleman long resident in Paris. He had made Ozanam's acquaintance when the latter was known to few of the great world, and, with that instinct which enables cultivated minds to recognise genius before fame has made it patent, he held out his hand to the young Professor, prophesying that he would one day be a great man. Ozanam was for years a constant and honoured guest in the *salon* of the Marquise de Salvo, and also in those of Madame Swetchine and Madame Récamier, where he met the *élite* of social as well as intellectual celebrities. M. Ampère the father had presented him to Madame Récamier when he was a student in Paris, but Ozanam seldom went to her house; and when she playfully reproached him with this, he said, "I am too young yet for such learned and wise company, Madame; when I am a man, in seven years hence, I will return and pay my respects to you very often, if you permit me." When he did return to Paris as a married man, one of his earliest visits was to the charming recluse of the Abbaye-aux-Bois.

"Ah, so you have kept your promise!" she exclaimed laughingly when he appeared; "it is just seven years since your last visit to me!" And so it was; Ozanam had forgotten the promise, but he had kept it.

He had become acquainted at Pisa with a Jew who had recently embraced Christianity at the cost of many sacrifices, and had still much to contend with. Ozanam was deeply interested in him, and when the convert left Italy he gave him some valuable introductions to friends in Paris, and corresponded with him, making it a duty to sustain and cheer him by letters suffused with his own vigorous and joyous faith. "It would have been a delight to me to write to you much sooner, had I not been too weak to accomplish it," he says. "But the hand of God has touched me, I believe, as it touched Job, Ezechias, and Tobias, not unto death, but unto a prolonged trial. I have not, unfortunately, the patience of these just men; I am easily cast down by suffering, and I should be inconsolable for my weakness if I did not find in the Psalms those cries of sorrow which David sends forth to God, and which God at last answers by granting him pardon and peace. Oh, my friend! when one has the happiness to have become a Christian, it is a great honour to be born an Israelite, to feel one's-self the son of those patriarchs and prophets whose utterances are so beautiful that the Church has found nothing finer to place on the lips of her children. During many weeks of extreme languor the Psalms have never been out of my hands. I was never wearied of reading over and over those sublime lamentations, those flights of hope, those supplications full of love which answer to all the wants and all the miseries of human nature. It is nearly three thousand years since a king composed those songs in his days of repentance and desolation, and we still find in

them the expression of our deepest anguish and the consolation of our sorrows. The priest recites them daily; thousands of monasteries have been founded in order that these psalms might be chanted at every hour, and that this voice of supplication might never be silent. The gospel alone is superior to the hymns of David, and this only because it is their fulfilment, because all the yearnings, all the ardours, all the holy impatience of the prophet find their accomplishment in the Redeemer issued of his race. So great is the bond between the two Testaments, that the Redeemer Himself had no name dearer to Him than that of *Son of David.* The two blind men of Jericho called Him by it, and I often cry out to Him with them, 'Son of David, have mercy on us!'"

The warmth of the soft Italian summer by the sea-side brought a perceptible improvement to Ozanam's health; he was once more induced to believe himself really better. "I take long walks," he tells M. Ampère, at the end of June. "I pass my morning on the rocks, watching the sea, until I have learned the play of its waves by heart. I am gaining strength but slowly, which was to be expected after so severe a crisis; but if July and August, who pass for being great physicians, treat me well, I shall be cured this autumn."

The old passion for work came back, strong as ever, with the slight return of strength. "Since I find myself equal to thinking and writing, I am writing my Odyssey, my journey to Burgos, in spite of Madame Ozanam's protestations," he says, with that touching waywardness of invalids, who rebel against an authority rendered powerless by love. "Don't scold; I had a whole portfolio full of notes nearly all ready, and then legends, songs bought in the streets, and finally the poem of the Cid. . . . I have even made

my peace with my implacable guardian by reading to her a certain page of my work where she recognised the merry row of the Spanish kitchens."

In the midst of his many consolations, there was one disappointment which Ozanam felt keenly: he had failed to establish a Conference at Siena. It was all the more to be regretted, because the Grand-Duke had recently divided the University of Pisa, and placed half of it at Siena, which thus became the centre of a young population grievously in want of some moral resource in the shape of healthy and interesting occupation. The effeminate character of the young Tuscans themselves, added to local prejudices against the Society, had, however, frustrated every attempt to import it there up to the present. Ozanam could not be persuaded but that a vigorous personal effort might overcome these obstacles, so he determined to go to Siena himself. His wife and medical advisers entreated him not to compromise the improvement in his health by the fatigue and excitement of the step; but he silenced this argument by asking, "What better use can we make of the health God gives us than by exercising it in His service?" He certainly did not spare it on this occasion. During the four days that he remained at Siena he worked indefatigably at the business of his mission, but it was all to no purpose. Padre Pendola, who was his friend, and perhaps the most influential man in the city, being head of all the Deaf and Dumb Institutions in Tuscany, and of the College of Tolomei, as well as Professor in the University, even Padre Pendola refused to be convinced. "It is not possible," he repeated to the Frenchman's pleadings; "the young nobles of Tuscany are too soft, too idle; you never could get them to visit the poor." He spent his last evening in trying to persuade the Padre, but, beyond a

warmly expressed hope that the future might see the scheme realised, the latter remained unmoved, and Ozanam left him more downcast than he had been in the whole course of his illness. "I am no longer good for anything; God will not deign to make use of me any more," he said, when he came home tired and crestfallen; and he confessed it was only the hope, amounting to certainty, that he would have succeeded in rendering a last service to the poor, which had enabled him to undertake the journey.

This was at the end of June. They went on to Antignano, a little village overlooking the sea, and there Ozanam determined to make a final effort. He wrote to Padre Pendola, adjuring him to yield to his entreaties, and take the cause of his beloved confraternity in hand:—

". . . . All that you have done for myself and my little family touched me less, Reverend Father, than the hope you held out to me at the last in favour of St. Vincent de Paul. This dear Society is also my family. Next to God, it was the means of preserving my faith after I left my good and pious parents. I love it, therefore, and cling to it with all my heart; it has been a joy to me to see the good seed growing and prospering in Tuscan soil.

"Above all, I have seen it do so much good, sustain so many young men in the path of virtue, and inspire a smaller number with such wonderful zeal! We have conferences at Quebec and in Mexico. We have them at Jerusalem. We most certainly have one in Paradise, for during the twenty years that we have existed at least a thousand members have taken the road to a better world. How then is it possible that we should not have one at Siena, which is called the *antechamber of Paradise?* How is it possible that in the city of Our Blessed Lady a work, whose chief patroness she is, should not succeed? . . . You have amongst your children many who are rich, Reverend

Father,—oh! what a salutary lesson, how strengthening for those soft young hearts, to show them the poor, to show them Jesus Christ, not in pictures painted by great masters, or on altars resplendent with gold and light, but to show them Jesus Christ and His wounds in the persons of the poor! We have often talked together of the weakness, the effeminacy, the inanity of even Christian men amongst the nobility of France and Italy. But I am satisfied this arises from a want in their education; there is one thing they have not been taught; there is one thing they are only acquainted with by name, and which we must have seen others suffer from in order to learn how to bear it ourselves when, sooner or later, our turn comes. This one thing is sorrow, privation, want. These young seigneurs ought to know what hunger and thirst and the destitution of a naked garret mean. They ought to see fellow-creatures in misery, distress,—sick children, little ones crying with hunger. They ought to see them that they may love them. Either the spectacle would make their hearts beat with awakened pulses, or they are a lost generation. But we should never believe in the death of a young Christian soul. 'She is not dead, but sleepeth.' Dear and estimable friend, I send you, in the Bulletin of the Society, some excellent instructions on the '*formation of conferences in houses of education.*' Assuredly your experience needs not to be enlightened. . . . Soon your best young men, divided into little batches of three and four, and accompanied by a master, will be nimbly ascending the poor man's stairs, and you will see them coming home sad and happy,—sad at the sight of the wretchedness they have seen, happy at having even ever so little relieved it. Some will go about it coldly, perhaps, without zeal or intelligence; others, on the contrary, will take fire at the work, and will pass on their heat to places where no con-

ferences yet exist, or they will rekindle the warmth of those that are already in existence, . . . and out of all this good a portion will be taken, and added to the crown which God is preparing for Padre Pendola, but which He will give him, I earnestly hope, as late as possible.

"And now it dawns on me that I am practising the old French proverb,—*Gros Jean veut prêcher son curé!* No, no, my Father, it is not I who am preaching; it is you, your example, your charity that are preaching to me, and bidding me leave this good work confidently in your hands."

Ozanam waited a fortnight for an answer to this letter; it came then, brief and pregnant: "My dear friend, I founded yesterday, the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul, two conferences, one in my college, and one in the town."

He was very happy after this. Everything amused and pleased him. He was full of sympathy with the joys of life that were opening out to others, while they were swiftly passing away from him. A friend writes to announce his approaching marriage, and Ozanam answers gaily: "Ha! ha! so he is caught at last, the impregnable! The free heart has been taken captive and put in chains!—silken and golden chains, bonds that possess everything to charm the eyes and the ears, the imagination and the reason. The good fairies who destined him this fair companion took care to load her with their fairy gifts; they crowned her with all the graces; no wonder the proud freeman capitulated! . . . You deserved to meet with one of those souls whose society constitutes the joy and the honour of our destiny. Such meetings are rare here below, and only those who have experienced their blessedness have a right to speak of them; and so I congratulate you. I rejoice, as at a good omen, over the name of Amélie, by which you will call your wife. Is it

after us also that you choose the 23d for the day of your wedding? The 23d brings luck."

His playful appeal to M. Ampère for an alms to his "beggars" in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, had not been made in vain. A brilliant review of the *Poëtes Franciscains* appeared in that periodical in June, and was a source of great pleasure to Ozanam, in whom the author was still strong enough to be keenly alive to an enlightened criticism. "You have far surpassed my hopes; you have overpowered me and my poor Franciscans," he says to the critic. "I must thank you in the name of those dear beggars, who come to life again under your touch, and whom you paint better in this brief sketch than I in my long gallery. Your three pages have the perfume of that convent garden which you describe with the jessamine creeping along the wall. Amélie and I, being impartial judges in the case, have agreed that this short article is one of your most exquisite touches. I must say that your word of regret for the absent Professor touched something deeper than self-love, and had an accent that went to my very heart. . . . A certain Padre Frederic, himself a Franciscan, and a poet greatly admired at Florence, is going to publish a translation of the little volume, and, from the silence of his cell in Ara Cœli, the General of the Order has addressed his thanks to me with a diploma, which is not the least precious of my titles. He places me on the list of the benefactors of the Franciscan family, and associates me to the merits of the *Frères-Mineurs*, who work and pray for all the world."

He had looked forward, while it was possible, to following up his candidature for the Institute this summer, on his return to Paris, but in spite of the rally, which still maintained itself, he saw it was vain to cling to the hope. "A hermit of Montenero has no business to think of the

Academy of Inscriptions," he says good-humouredly to M. Ampère. "In making up my mind to remain in Italy, I necessarily gave up the chance of canvassing for the venerable M. Pardessus' *fauteuil.* . . . Moreover, in a moment of such solemn import, when all other questions of the future hang upon the supreme question of my health, when I am asking God to grant me life for the sake of my wife and child, it seems to me that there would be a kind of temerity in asking for anything superfluous, for what flatters my literary self-love. It seems to me that I ought to wait humbly on Providence until it is decided whether I am to be cured or not, and if God permits me to resume my career, then I may legitimately aspire to those honours which would put the crown upon it."

He continued to work at his Odyssey, as he called it, although his weakness had greatly increased after his removal to Antignano; he could only write a few lines at a time, being compelled to rest on his sofa during the intervals. The closing pages of this exquisite narrative are almost the last he ever wrote. By the time he had finished them he was no longer able to hold a pen, except to write down some fugitive thoughts and short prayers which his wife was anxious to preserve. Up to the end of July he was able to walk out a little in the evening, and to go to mass every morning. The church was at only a few minutes' distance from the little villa where he lived. It was in the fortress, a remnant of those stormy ages when the blue Mediterranean was ploughed up by the ships of the Saracen, and its peaceful shores turned into bloody battlefields. Ozanam had been the object of many flattering tokens from the highest personages during his stay in Tuscany. He had been made a member of the Academy of La Trusca simultaneously with Count Cesare Balbo; all the social and learned notabilities had sought him out,

anxious to testify their admiration and regard. He was grateful for this, but indifferent to it. He had always rather avoided than sought the notice of the great ones of the earth, and now that death was casting its vivid light over the vanities of life, these attentions became irksome and distasteful to him. He avoided receiving visitors of rank when it was possible. If the Prince X. drove up to the villa in his fine equipage and requested "the honour of making the great *savan's* acquaintance," Ozanam would send a courteous message excusing himself on the plea of his extreme exhaustion; but if, the same evening, as it once happened, a poor young man walked in the dust and heat all the way from Leghorn to obtain some information as to how he should found a conference in his native village, he was joyfully received, and the dying man would gather up his strength to converse with him for two hours. The surest way to rouse, and even relieve him, was to give him the opportunity of doing good.

There were a few kind families on the coast who used to come and see him often; amongst them the Ferruccis, so well known now through the fame of their saintly Rosa. Ozanam enjoyed their visits so long as he was able to see any one; but none, perhaps, were so tenderly welcome as those of his brothers of St. Vincent de Paul. It was indeed touching to see their cordial affection for him, and the simple, kindly ways they had of showing it. Three young men who lived near Leghorn came constantly to see him, then merely to ask how he was, and if they could not be of any use by doing some little commission at Leghorn for Madame Ozanam. One afternoon they came laden with flowers and a provision of ice and snow, which was not to be had at Antignano; he was in great pain accompanied with fever; they went away with sad hearts. About three o'clock the same morning the servant was awoke by

a noise as of sand flung at the window; it was the young men who had come back with more ice, unable in their anxiety to pass all night without news of the sick man; they were going to walk back again, but Madame Ozanam insisted on their resting the remainder of the night at the villa. The fishermen and peasants of the neighbourhood had grown attached to the "saintly stranger," and carried their graceful tribute of sympathy in flowers and fruit to him, and assuredly none were more gratefully received by the humble and loving heart that so prized the affection of simple souls.

From the beginning of August he was not able to go beyond the terrace before the house; on the eve of the 15th, however, he declared he would go to the church and hear mass the next day. His heart seemed so set on it that his wife had not the courage to oppose him; accordingly she sent to Leghorn to order a carriage; but when Ozanam heard this, he said he preferred to walk. "If it is to be my last walk on earth, let it be to the house of God on the Feast of the Assumption!" he said; and so, leaning on her whom he so truly called his guardian angel, he set out on foot. The villagers knew he was coming, and assembled outside the church, to testify their affectionate sympathy. As Ozanam came slowly on, looking like a spirit in his transparent pallor, the men all bared their heads, and the women and children greeted him with a pretty wave of the hand, their graceful manner of saluting. He was moved to tears by the homage.

But another more touching still awaited him. The old curé of Antignano was dying; but when he heard that Ozanam had come to the church, and wished to receive Communion before Mass, he said to those about him, "Get me up; I must give it to him; no one else shall have that privilege." They dressed him, and he was assisted down-

stairs. The church was garlanded with flowers, and brilliantly lighted up in honour of Our Lady's Assumption; the contadini, too, wore their gala dresses in her honour; chance seemed to have invested the scene with the grace and glory of a bridal pageant; but there were tears instead of smiles amongst the spectators when the husband, supported by his young wife, advanced to the altar, and knelt down by her side, they two alone, as they had been twelve years ago on that other bridal day of which this was the crown and the completion. The dying priest, assisted likewise in his weakness, came forth and administered Communion to them, and then was led away. It was the last time he exercised his priestly office on earth; he never left his room again; neither was Ozanam ever again present at the holy sacrifice.

Three days after this he added a codicil to his will, which had been made at Pisa on his birthday. It is dated the 18th August 1853, Antignano. The following is an extract from the will itself:—

"In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. . . . I commit my soul to Jesus Christ my Saviour; with fear because of my sins, but confiding in infinite mercy, I die in the bosom of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church. I have known the doubts of the present age, but all my life has convinced me that there is no rest for the mind and the heart except in the faith of that Church and under her authority. If I attach any value to my long studies, it is because they give me the right to entreat those I love to remain faithful to a religion where I found light and peace.

"My supreme prayer to my wife, my child, my brothers and brothers-in-law, and all those who may be born of them, is to persevere in the faith, in spite of the humiliations, the scandals, and the desertions they will be witness of.

"To my tender Amélie, who has made the joy of my life, and whose devoted care has consoled my long sufferings, I address a farewell—short, like all earthly things. I thank her, I bless her, I await her. It is only in heaven that I shall be able to give her back all the love she deserves. I give to my child the blessing of the patriarchs, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It grieves me not to be able to carry on further the dear labour of her education, but I confide it without fear to her virtuous mother.

"To my brothers Alphonse and Charles I offer my sincere gratitude for their affection,—to my brother Charles especially, for the anxious care my health has caused him. To my mother, Madame Soulacroix, to Charles Soulacroix, I give a rendezvous amidst those over whom we have wept together. I embrace in one thought all those whom I cannot mention here by name. . . . I thank once more all those who have been kind to me. I ask pardon for my hastiness and bad example. I implore the prayers of my friends, of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

"Let not your zeal be slackened by those who will say, *He is in heaven.* Pray unceasingly for one who loved you all much, but who has sinned much. Sure of your supplications, dear, kind friends, I shall leave this world with less fear. I firmly hope that we shall not be separated, and that I shall remain in the midst of you until you rejoin me.

"May the blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, rest upon all of you. Amen."

He now grew rapidly worse. His brothers were sent for; the news went forth to his friends to pray for him, —that he was dying. All felt it as a private grief and a great public loss.

"The last news of M. Ozanam is heart-breaking," the Abbé Perreyve writes. "Charles had a telegram from Madame Ozanam four days ago, saying that the dear invalid is in a state of extreme weakness. . . . I cannot tell you the profound grief that this telegram has been to the hearts of all those who knew and loved M. Ozanam. What a loss for all that was right, religion, truth! But, above all, what a loss for me, whom he loved! I assure you that his death will be for me a great sorrow, and I would give many days of my own life to redeem it. How feeble our prayers are! Are there no more saints anywhere? And who was more worthy of a miracle, if a miracle there must be?

"But I will stifle the murmurs that are rising in the depths of my heart. God has His own designs on souls. There are those whom He means to make into great saints, and who therefore have need of great sorrows. . . . But meanwhile this is sad, and calls for tears. Pray for him in your mass. Who knows? Perhaps God is only waiting for a last great effort on our part to grant us this grace. For my part, I could ask nothing yesterday of our Lord but that He would grant him the grace of a calm death, without agony, with sure hope of heavenly rest. The mere sound of the word *rest* has something appropriate and touching in it applied to that sensitive, impressionable soul. O how he will enjoy that serenity of bliss, whose very foundation is the immutability of God!"[1]

Yet Ozanam was far from enjoying this serene sense of security which others felt regarding him. He had always had a great fear of death, or rather of what makes death terrible—judgment; and now that the shadow of the Great

[1] This letter is dated "August 8th" in the collection of the Abbé Perreyve's letters, but it is clearly a mistake. Charles did not rejoin his brother until quite the end of August.

White Throne was upon him, this feeling deepened in intensity. He spoke frequently of his sins, of the punishment they merited, of the scandal they had caused, the world expecting so much from Catholics, who profess to embody the faith in their actions. Once, when he seemed more than usually impressed by these considerations, one near him thought to soothe him by suggesting tenderly, that after all he had not been such a great sinner; but Ozanam answered quickly, in a tone of austere humility, "Child, you do not know what the sanctity of God is!"

His piety seemed to grow more fervent as his bodily prostration increased. He read the Bible almost constantly now, and would remain for hours rapt in meditation on it, expressing himself from time to time in a sublime manner on various passages, in the Psalms and the Book of Job especially. The words of Scripture took such complete possession of his mind, that they made him oblivious of what was going on around him. It had always been a great pain to him to inflict the least trouble or fatigue on others, but now that his condition exacted more laborious attendance than ever, he submitted to it almost unconsciously; it was sufficient to recite aloud some verses of the Psalms while he was suffering most, to make him forget his own pain and the distress of those who were striving to alleviate it. He frequently greeted his wife with those words which he loved to apply to himself: "It has been written at the beginning of the Book that I should do Thy will, my God. I have willed it, and placed Thy law in the midst of my heart." He lived almost out of doors stretched on his sofa, which had been wheeled out to the terrace, and there he would lie silent for hours with the Bible open by his side. One evening he lay thus, watching the sun sinking into the blue Mediterranean; his wife had drawn her chair a little behind

him, that he might not see the tears she could not restrain, when something, in the extreme serenity of his countenance, prompted her to ask which of all the gifts of God he considered the greatest. He replied without hesitating, as if the question had fallen in with his own thoughts, "*Peace of heart;* without this we may possess everything and yet not be happy; with it we can bear the hardest trials and the approach of death."

A few days later, they were sitting together on the terrace listening to the murmur of summer seas and the birds singing in the ilex grove, when Ozanam, after a long silence, began to speak with regret of his interrupted work. "If anything consoles me," he said, "for leaving this world without having accomplished what I wished to do, it is that I have never worked for the praise of men, but always for the service of truth." Such a testimony was indeed a consolation worthy of his noble life. Ozanam thought he had lived to no purpose; that his life had been a failure, because he left his work unfinished. It is always so with souls like his. They trace the furrow and scatter the seed, and then pass on leaving others to come and reap the fruit. No man ever fully achieved his life's programme except Him who came down from heaven to do His Father's business, and, having done it, died.

For the last twelve years of his life, Ozanam had the graceful habit of presenting some flowers to his wife on the 23d of every month, the date of their marriage. He remembered it now, and when the festive day came round, he greeted her in the morning with a branch of lovely flowering myrtle, which he had sent for to the shore, having heard her admire it.

On the last day of August they left Antignano. His two brothers had arrived to take him back to France. He had prayed for this last grace, to be allowed to die in

his own country, and amongst his own people. When all was ready for the departure, and the carriage awaited him at the door, he expressed a wish to go and look upon the sea once more; his wife and one of his brothers assisted him to the terrace, and he stood for a moment gazing at the waves breaking upon the beach; then, baring his head in the sunlight, he lifted up his hands and said aloud, "Oh my God! I thank Thee for the afflictions and the sufferings Thou hast sent me in this place; accept them in expiation of my sins." Then turning to his wife, he said, "I should like you, too, to give thanks with me for my sufferings."

They prayed in silence for a moment, and then, clasping her in his arms, he cried out, "And, O my Lord! I bless Thee for the consolations Thou hast granted me."

He was assisted on deck, and lay there watching the shores of Italy till they faded from his view. The sea was calm as a lake, the skies were cloudless. He bore the voyage without much apparent fatigue. As the shores of Provence came in sight, he burst out into subdued thanksgiving at being permitted to see France again. When the vessel entered the harbour of Marseilles, he roused himself as with a last effort, and said almost cheerfully to his mother-in-law, and other members of his wife's family who had come to meet him, "Now that I have placed Amélie in the proper hands, God may do what He sees fit with me!"

He cherished the hope of going on to Paris, and dying amidst the scenes of his labours; but this wish was not granted: he was far too exhausted to bear the additional journey.

His arrival at Marseilles was quickly known, and the brotherhood of St. Vincent de Paul hastened to his door with every testimony of sorrow and respect. He was too ill to see any of them, but he was greatly touched to hear

of their constant visits. Nothing could surpass the serenity that his soul now enjoyed; every trace of fear, of apprehension had vanished; all bodily suffering had likewise ceased, and he appeared like one already dwelling in the sensible presence of God; he seldom spoke, but communed still with his beloved ones by a pressure of the hand, a sign, and that smile that lay like a halo on the wasted face, touching it already with the peace that passeth all understanding. Feeling that the end was near, he himself asked for the last sacraments, and received them with great fervour and the liveliest consciousness. When all was over, his brother, remembering how keenly he had feared the Divine judgments, urged him gently to have confidence in the great mercy of God; but Ozanam, as if he understood not the allusion, answered with a look of sweet surprise, "Why should I fear Him? I love Him so much!"

On the evening of the 8th of September, the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity, the summons came. His wife was beside him, and his brothers, and a few near relatives. The adjoining room was crowded with those other brothers, the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, who knelt in silence, joining in the prayers that were speeding their founder into the presence of his Judge. He had fallen into a gentle slumber, waking up at intervals to murmur a blessing, a word of love, an invocation.

Suddenly opening his dark eyes in a wide, startled gaze, he lifted up his hands and cried out in a loud voice, "My God! my God! have mercy on me!"

They were his last words. Frederic Ozanam had passed into the light of his Redeemer's presence.

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